UNIDENTIFIED

PELOUBET'S SELECT NOTES

ON THE

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

1916

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PELOUBET'S

SELECT NOTES

ON THE

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

FOR

1916.

New Testament: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

THE BASIS FOR TEACHING ALL GRADES IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
With all that can aid the teacher in his own study and in teaching, such as
BROAD VIEWS OF THE HISTORY, MAKING ONE CONSECUTIVE STORY. EXPLANATIONS OF THE TEXT.
HINTS TO TEACHERS. ILLUSTRATIONS. APPLICATIONS OF ANCIENT PRINCIPLES TO MODERN TIMES.
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BY

REV. F. N. PELOUBET, D.D.
PROF. AMOS R. WELLS, LITT.D., LL.D.

Forty-second Annual Volume.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Title	Page 1	Pictures as an Aid to Teaching	Page 6
Table of Contents	2	Decorating the Sunday School Rooms	6
List of Lessons	2	Moving Pictures	7
Chronology of the Acts	3, 4	Department for Surplus Material	7
References to English Literature	5	New Lesson Committee	7
A Basis of Teaching for all Grades	5	The Book of the Acts	8
The Scripture Text	5	Bibliography	9–11
Sunday School Statistics	6	List of Wilde's Bible Pictures on the Lessons	12

Map of Palestine in the Time of the Apostles. Map of Asia Minor in the Time of Paul. Map of Paul's Journeyings.

FULL PAGE HALF-TONE ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Mount of Olives from Jerusalem frontis.
View of Joppa facing 2d quarter
General View of Athens facing 3d quarter
St. Paul's Prison, Cæsarea facing 4th quarter

LIST OF LESSONS FOR THE YEAR.

New Testament: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation.

Lesson.	First Quarter.	Page.
I.	Jan. 2. The Ascending Lord. Acts 1:1–14	13
II.	Jan. 9. The Coming of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:1–13	22
III.	Jan. 16. Peter's Sermon at Pentecost. Acts 2:14–47	29
IV.	Jan. 23. The Spirit of Life. Rom. 8:12–30	37
V.	Jan. 30. The Lame Man Leaping. Acts 3	42
VI.	Feb. 6. The Boldness of Peter and John. Acts 4:1–31	49
VII.	Feb. 13. Humbled and Exalted. Phil. 2:1–11	57
VIII.	Feb. 20. The Christian Brotherhood at Jerusalem. (Temperance.) Acts 4:32–5:16	64
IX.	Feb. 27. The Seven Helpers. Acts 6	70
X.	Mch. 5. The Death of Stephen. Acts 7:1–8:3	76
XI.	Mch. 12. Heroes and Martyrs of Faith. Heb. 11:1–12:2	84
XII.	Mch. 19. Philip and the Ethiopian. Acts 8:26–40	92
XIII.	Mch. 26. Review. The Great Multitude	100

	Second Quarter.	
I.	Apr. 2. Conversion of Saul. Acts 9:1–31	102
II.	Apr. 9. Æneas and Dorcas. Acts 9:32–43	109
III.	Apr. 16. Peter and Cornelius. Acts 10:1–23	116
IV.	Apr. 23. The Gospel for the Gentiles. Acts 10:24–48	123
V.	Apr. 30. Peter Delivered from Prison. Acts 12:1–19	130
VI.	May 7. The Missionaries of Antioch. Acts 11:19–30; 12:25–13:12	137
VII.	May 14. "Lo, We Turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13:13–52	144
VIII.	May 21. The Cripple of Lystra. Acts 14	152
IX.	May 28. The Council at Jerusalem. Acts 15:1–35	159
X.	June 4. The Call of the West. Acts 15:36–16:15	166
XI.	June 11. Sowing and Reaping. (Temperance.) Gal. 6	174
XII.	June 18. The Philippian Jailer. Acts 16:16–40	180
XIII.	June 25. Review. The Philippian Christians	187

Lesson.	Third Quarter.	Page.
I.	July 2. Paul at Thessalonica and Berœa. Acts 17:1–15	190
II.	July 9. The Thessalonian Christians. 1 Thess. 1; 2:17–20; 4:13–18	198
III.	July 16. Paul at Athens. Acts 17:16–34	204
IV.	July 23. Paul at Corinth. Acts 18:1–22	212
V.	July 30. The Word of the Cross. 1 Cor. 1:1–2:5	220
VI.	Aug. 6. The Greatest Thing in the World. (Temperance.) 1 Cor. 13	225
VII.	Aug. 13. The Grace of Giving. 2 Cor. 9	231
VIII.	Aug. 20. The Riot at Ephesus. Acts 19:23–41	238
IX.	Aug. 27. Journeying to Jerusalem. Acts 20:16–38	245
X.	Sept. 3. Paul's Sorrows and Comforts. 2 Cor. 11:21–12:10	252
XI.	Sept. 10. The Arrest of Paul. Acts 21:17–40	259
XII.	Sept. 17. A Prisoner in the Castle. Acts 22	266
XIII.	Sept. 24. Review. The Things which are Not Seen	272

	Fourth Quarter.	
I.	Oct. 1. A Plot that Failed. Acts 23	274
II.	Oct. 8. Paul before Felix. Acts 24	280
III.	Oct. 15. The Appeal to Cæsar. Acts 25	287
IV.	Oct. 22. Paul's Defence before Agrippa. Acts 26	293
V.	Oct. 29. The Voyage. Acts 27:1–38	300
VI.	Nov. 5. Shipwrecked on Melita. Acts 27:38–28:10	308
VII.	Nov. 12. World's Temperance Sunday. Rom. 14:13–15:3	315
VIII.	Nov. 19. From Melita to Rome. Acts 28:11–31	322
IX.	Nov. 26. A Living Sacrifice. Rom. 12	331
X.	Dec. 3. Jesus Christ, the First and the Last. Rev. 1	338
XI.	Dec. 10. Faithful unto Death. Rev. 2:1–17	345
XII.	Dec. 17. The Holy City. Rev. 21 1–4, 9–14, 22–27; 22:1–5	354
XIII.	Dec. 24. Christmas Lesson: Unto Us a Son is Given. Isa. 9:2–7	362
XIV.	Dec. 31. Review. Christ's Coming, and Coming to Christ	369

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CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACTS.

Acts.	Events.	Place.	Date A.D.[1]	Contemporary History.
THE TWO POWERS—CHRIST and THE HOLY SPIRIT.				
1: 1-3	Resurrection days	Galilee	30. April, May	Tiberius, emperor, 14-37 A.D.
1: 4-12	Commission to Apostles and Ascension	Bethany	30. May 18	Pontius Pilate, procurator, 26-36.
1: 13, 14	Waiting for the promise of the Father	Jerusalem, in an upper room	30	Paul enters public life, A.D. 29, aged 30.
1: 15-26	Election of Matthias to take the place of Judas	"		
2: 1-13	Pentecost: the Gift of Tongues.	Jerusalem		
THE HOME CHURCH—JERUSALEM. 6 years				
2: 14-36	Peter's address	Jerusalem		Seneca. 4 B.C.-65 A.D.
2: 37-41	The first converts: 3000	"		Essays and Tragedies.
2: 42-47	The early church	"		
3: 1-10	The lame man healed	Temple courts		Gamaliel. 30-40 A.D.
3: 11-26	Second address by Peter	"		
4: 1-22	The first persecution: Peter and John imprisoned	Jerusalem		Philo Judæus. 20 B.C.-after 40 A.D.
4: 23-37	A fresh baptism of the Spirit	"		
5: 1 11	Ananias and Sapphira	"	30	
5: 12-16	Spread of Gospel in Jerusalem	"	to	
5: 17-42	Second persecution: Sanhedrin	"	34	
6: 1-7	Appointment of deacons	"	35	
6: 8 15	Preaching of Stephen	"	35 to 36	Deposition of Pontius Pilate. 36.
7: 1-60	Martyrdom of Stephen	"	36	Sent to Rome for trial.
8: 1-4	General persecution			Vitellius takes his place as
8: 5-25	Philip the Evangelist in	Samaria		governor.
8: 26 40	Philip and the Ethiopian	Road to Gaza		
HOME MISSIONS—OVER ALL PALESTINE. 10 years.				
9: 1-22	Conversion of Saul of Tarsus	Near Damascus		Paul, aged 37.
(Gal. 1: 17)	Saul in Arabia			Death of Tiberius, 16 March, 37
9: 23-27	St. Paul persecuted; escapes	Damascus	38	Accession of Caligula.
9: 28-29	St. Paul preaches in Jerusalem.	Jerusalem		Release of Herod Agrippa I.
9: 30	St. Paul goes to Cilicia	Tarsus, etc.	38-40	Banishment of Antipas, 39.
9: 31-35	St. Peter cures Æneas	Lydda		Caligula orders his statue to be set up at Jerusalem.
9: 36-42	Dorcas restored to life	Joppa		Claudius Emperor, Jan. 24, 41, to Oct. 13, 54.
10: 1-48	Cornelius the Centurion converted	Cæsarea	41	Seneca in exile, 41-49.
11: 1-18	The question of admitting the Gentiles	Jerusalem		
11: 19-21	First Gentile church	Antioch	38 41	
	Herod Agrippa I, King of Judea		41	
11: 22, 23	Barnabas at Antioch	Antioch	42, 43	
11: 25, 26	Paul called from Tarsus to Antioch	"	42, 43	Romans in Britain, 43.
12: 1, 2	Martyrdom of St. James	Jerusalem	44. Spring	
12: 3-18	Imprisonment and deliverance of St. Peter	"	44. Spring	Death of Herod Agrippa I, 44.
12: 19-23	Death of Herod Agrippa I.	Cæsarea	44. Early Summer	London founded, 47.
11: 27-30	Famine. Relief sent to Jerusalem by Barnabas and Saul		44-46	
12: 24, 25	Return of Saul and Barnabas with John Mark to	Antioch	46	Expulsion of Jews from Rome, 48 (?)
FOREIGN MISSIONS—ASIA MINOR and EUROPE.				
13: 1-14: 28	**First Missionary Journey** by Saul and Barnabas		March 47 to 49	
13: 1-3	Ordained as missionaries at	Antioch, Syria		
13: 4-52	In Cyprus and Antioch of Pisidia	Asia Minor		
14: 1-20	In Iconium, Lystra, Derbe	"		
14: 21-25	Revisiting the churches	"	49	
14: 26-28	Report to home church	Antioch. Syria	49	Caractacus defeated in Britain.
15: 1-35	Council at Jerusalem	Jerusalem	50	

[1] Note. The dates in this column are the prevalent ones, and are sufficiently accurate for understanding the course of the history Almost every writer on Acts differs slightly from them, but only slightly.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACTS. — *Continued.*

Acts.	Events.	Place.	Date A.D.	Contemporary History.
15:40–18:22	**Second Missionary Journey** by St. Paul and Silas		50–52	
16:1–5	Revisiting the churches of	Asia Minor	50–52	
16:6 11	St. Paul enters Europe	Macedonia	50–52	
16:12–40	St. Paul at Philippi; Lydia; conversion of jailer	Philippi	50–52	
17:1–14	St. Paul in Thessalonica and Berœa	Macedonia	50–52	Gallio pro-consul at Corinth.
17:15–34	St. Paul at Athens	Greece	51–52	
18:1–18	St. Paul at Corinth. Crispus	Greece	51–52	
	1 and 2 Thessalonians			
18:18–22	Returns home via Ephesus and Cæsarea to	Antioch	51–52	Felix, procurator, 52–59.
18:22	Brief visit to Jerusalem	Jerusalem		
18:22, 23	St. Paul in Antioch	Syria	52	Nero, emperor, 54–68.
	Galatians			
18:23–21:16	**Third Missionary Journey** by Paul.		53–57	Birth of Tacitus, 55.
18:24–28	Apollos at Ephesus	Asia Minor		St. Peter at Corinth, 55 or 56.
19:1–11	St. Paul nearly three years at Ephesus	Ephesus	53–56	
	1 Corinthians	"	56	
19:12–20	Sceva the Exorcist	"		
19:21–41	Riot at Ephesus. Diana	"		
20:1–5	St. Paul revisits Macedonia	Macedonia	57	
	2 Corinthians	"		
	St. Paul three months at Corinth	Greece		
	Romans			
20:6–12	St. Paul at Troas. Eutychus	Troas		
20:13–16	Sails to Miletus			
20:17–38	Address to Ephesian elders at	Miletus	57	
21:1–16	Journey by Tyre and Cæsarea to	Jerusalem		

PAUL DESIRES TO GO TO ROME. His enemies plot to take his life. But every attack becomes a means of his reaching Rome in the best way.

21:17–20	St. Paul's reception by church	Jerusalem		
21:21–40	St. Paul's arrest in Temple	"		
22:1–23:11	St. Paul a prisoner in Castle of Antonia	"		
23:12–22	The conspiracy against Paul's life	"		
23:23–35	St. Paul sent secretly to	Cæsarea		
24:1–22	St. Paul's trial before Felix	"		
24:23–27	St. Paul in prison two years at	"	57	Festus, procurator, 59–63.
25:1–12	St. Paul accused to Festus. He appeals to Cæsar	"	59	*St. Luke's Gospel* probably written.
25:13–26:32	St. Paul before Festus and Agrippa	"		

PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME. The shipwreck becomes the means of his safety. His success in preaching the Gospel at Rome.

27:1–44	St. Paul's voyage and shipwreck	Mediterranean	Sept. 59	
28:1–10	St. Paul on the Island of Malta	"	60	Nero murders Agrippina.
28:11–29	St. Paul at Rome: Conference with the Jews	Rome		
28:30, 31	Paul a prisoner in his own hired house at	"	61, 62	
	Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians	"		Rebellion of Boadicea in Britain.
	Philippians	"		
	Close of the history in the *Acts*.			Boadicea defeated by Suetonius about 62.

Over the entrance gate to a certain playground in London is this motto, " No adults allowed to enter unless accompanied by children." That is the man whom the editors always have in their vision. Never the adult alone, nor the child alone, but the teacher with his class. No adults allowed to enter into their ideal unless accompanied by children.

One of the peculiar and most helpful of the aids these SELECT NOTES bring to the teachers, and through them to their scholars, is found in the abundance of its

REFERENCES TO ENGLISH LITERATURE.

The limitations of space compel us to omit many things that are very helpful in illustrating the lesson, especially to children, and also fuller discussions of subjects which the adults would like to pursue farther. For this reason we not only present as full a list as we can of books upon the general subject of our lessons in the following Bibliography, but bring to the notice of teachers sidelights, literary illustrations, poetic references, and every other help we can find that comes within the limits of the space at our command. These may not only recall familiar passages of literature to the teacher's mind, but may also suggest others; for every treasure and every gem points to the mine from which it came; every flower, to the gardens where a thousand more are growing. They also connect the Bible with the studies of the day-schools, and make it more real to them. At the same time they furnish the best and choicest aids, in the best form for teaching, to the great mass of Sunday school teachers who are " business men and busy women " and who must have such aid or do poorer work as teachers.

THE BASIS FOR TEACHING ALL GRADES.

This book is for the teachers of all grades in the Sunday school, from the student's adult classes to the smallest primary. Its purpose is to furnish the knowledge and the practical applications which must underlie all good teaching, even of the youngest classes. It is the basis of correct interpretation, of knowledge of the facts, of statement of principles, of legitimate inferences, on which the teacher may securely stand, and adapt his instruction to the particular grade he is teaching. For practically all schemes of Sunday school lessons, for old or young, at some time in their course take up in general the same passages of Scripture as the International Lessons for which during each six years' course are selected the most interesting and helpful parts of Scripture for the young.

So that teachers of other courses can, and I know some who do, keep on hand the *Select Notes* for the six-year course through the Bible, and it is not easy for any class or teacher to find better helps than the *Select Notes* on the portions studied, not only because of what they teach on different points, but also on account of the references to literature and to works upon the Bible, here given more fully than in any other book.

THE SCRIPTURE TEXT.

The Scripture text will this year be printed *in large type*, as usual, so that the basis of the lessons may be easily caught by the eye, in the *Authorized Version*, while the *changes made by the American Revision*, so far as they seriously affect the meaning to ordinary readers, are noted in the comments on the lessons.

The Authorized Version is the best basis for this purpose, for many reasons. Almost every one has the authorized version and uses it in the Sunday school. So that to give the Revision alone, would make Responsive Readings almost impossible. Hence those journals which use the American Revision, place the Authorized by its side. But this takes up too much room in a book. Moreover, Peloubet's *Select Notes* are used in every great country in the world, in most of which the Am. R. is not used, at least largely, in the Sunday schools. While the Am. R. has accomplished some splendid work, and made some great improvements, the Revisers compelled the publishers to print it in such solid form as to be difficult to use, and unattractive to the young. Hence we are under the necessity of using the Authorized Version in this volume, corrected by the improvements given in the Revisions.

STATISTICS PRESENTED TO THE SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTIONS, INCLUDING ALL OF NORTH AMERICA.

Cities where held.	Date.	Schools.	Teachers and Officers.	Scholars.	Total.
1. Baltimore	1875	69,272	788,805	6,062,064	6,950,869
2. Atlanta	1878	83,441	894,793	6,843,997	7,738,790
3. Toronto	1881	90,370	975,195	7,177,165	8,152,360
4. Louisville	1884	103,516	1,089,229	8,056,799	9,146,328
5. Chicago	1887	106,308	1,161,203	8,489,445	9,650,648
6. Pittsburg	1890	115,959	1,209,426	9,146,244	10,355,670
7. St. Louis	1893	131,918	1,377,735	10,317,472	11,695,208
8. Boston	1896	142,089	1,476,369	11,556,806	13,033,175
9. Atlanta	1899	148,139	1,482,308	12,017,325	13,469,633
10. Denver	1902	152,930	1,514,119	12,309,412	14,101,289
11. Toronto	1905	155,007	1,556,947	12,076,232	14,127,541
12. Louisville	1908	161,750	1,594,674	13,515,498	15,110,172
13. San Francisco	1911	173,459	1,670,846	14,946,504	16,617,350
14. Chicago	1914	175,685	1,690,739	16,750,297	18,441,036

Gaining a Million. — A careful revision of the statistics presented at the Zurich Convention reveals the fact that the Sunday-school membership of the world now numbers more than 30,000,000, instead of nearly 29,000,000 as previously reported.

PICTURES AS A CONTRIBUTION TO SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRESS.

For many years art has been an efficient aid to the Sunday school teacher. But in no department of Sunday school progress has there been a greater development in these later years both in quality and extent of use, than in pictures illustrating the Sunday school lessons.

Penny Pictures. There is a vast range of pictures beyond what is possible to include in this volume, but to which the teacher may have access. Wilde's penny pictures illustrate almost every lesson, usually by several different ones, from which a choice can be made. See a Selected List, on page 12.

W. A. Wilde Co. have a selection of beautiful colored pictures. Intermingling these with the penny pictures makes a beautiful and instructive dado around the Sunday school rooms and class rooms.

Stereoscopic Photographs are again becoming popular because the pictures are incomparably better than those of a few years ago. They are such life-like representations of the places where our Lord lived and walked and taught, the figures and the scenes are brought out so clearly, that it is almost the same as if we were actually travelling in the Holy Land. This can be made most useful for an evening meeting with the class. It would be well for each Sunday school to own a set of these pictures with several stereoscopes. Apply to Underwood & Underwood, Fifth Avenue and 19th Street, New York.

Postal-card Colored Pictures of Palestine, 75 cents a set of 30. Very good. Detroit Pub. Co., Detroit, Mich.

DECORATING THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOMS.

The day schools are decorating their rooms with pictures both for instruction and for beauty. These hanging upon the wall in daily view of the scholars become an education both in history and art, and good taste.

For the same reasons the Sunday school rooms should be adorned with pictures that are both beautiful and illustrative of the Bible History, kept always before the eyes, and giving a home-like atmosphere. A large number of reproductions of paintings by the great masters, and the most interesting of modern paintings, exact copies in form and color, are made in all sizes and at moderate cost by a wonderful secret process, in brown and gray prints, and hand-colored in the exact colors and shades of the originals.

The publishers have devised a way by which day schools can earn the necessary money, and which is equally well adapted to classes in the Sunday school. Horace K. Turner Co., 217 Clarendon St., Boston.

MOVING PICTURES

are so attractive to children that an increasing number of Sunday schools are using them with films describing Bible scenes for reviews, or any occasion when the Sunday school lessons can be made more vivid and instructive by means of them. "But the Standard Motion Picture Machine is not only an expensive and complicated device, but it requires an experienced operator, an expensive electric equipment and a permanent installation in a fireproof booth. It involves a lot of restrictions imposed by building committees, insurance underwriters and city fire authorities." But we found that we could use for a girls' camp fire entertainment in our parish house, the new Pathéscope, and that it was a safe motion picture machine, no fire risk, no insurance restrictions, and satisfactory. The Pathéscope Co., 33 W. 42d St., New York, and 25 Arch St., Boston, Mass.

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This new department is a blessing to Sunday schools, both in our own land and in mission fields. It is blessed to those who give and those who receive. It meets a special need in the home schools because it gives them another opportunity to put into practice the truths they learn.

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Address Rev. Samuel D. Price, 216 Metropolitan Tower, New York City. Enclose a stamp for the reply, and please indicate your denomination in full.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMITTEE.

For the New Series of Lessons 1918–1925.

Elected at the International Convention held at Chicago in 1914.

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Wilbur, C. E., Pittsburg, Pa., Methodist Protestant.

The committee consists of 34 members. Of these two died, Drs. Hamill and Phillips; and two resigned, Drs. Schauffler and Trout, — before the first annual meeting of the Committee in Chicago, April, 1915.

Concerning uniform lessons, the following recommendations were adopted:

1. That the Committee constantly observe the principle of adaptation of lesson material to the needs of the pupil, seeking to provide for each department of the Sunday School a thoroughly teachable lesson.

2. That the Committee select a given portion of Scripture, usually including a story or narrative, which shall serve as a common source of material for study in the different departments of the school; and that a general theme and Golden Text be selected for the whole school.

3. That the Committee designate appropriate portions of this common Scripture for study in the several departments of the school, and with each such designation specify a suitable sub-title and memory verses, with a special Golden Text whenever desirable.

4. That when deemed advisable the Committee provide references to other Scripture material especially suited to any given department, in addition to the regularly assigned portions for the day.

5. That the Committee, in selecting the common Scripture to be suggested for printing, should keep in mind the devotional needs of the school, and when deemed advisable may suggest an additional passage to meet these needs.

PROPORTION OF PUPILS USING GRADED LESSONS.

" According to the last report of the International Lesson Committee (1914) ' twenty publishing houses are now selling helps on the graded lessons to 30,565 Sunday schools.' As there are about 175,000 Sunday schools in this country, this gives a proportion of between one-fifth and one-sixth. The proportion as thus stated is small, but we must take into account the fact that a large number of such schools are using such lessons in only one or two departments." — *D. C. Cook's Executive*, Nov., 1914.

THE BOOK OF THE ACTS.

" If Luke's Gospel has a claim to be called ' the most beautiful book that has ever been written,' it is safe to say that its sequel is a book of unique interest and value." — *New Century Bible.*

This is the second volume of Luke's narrative of the founding of Christianity. " It is one unbroken story from beginning to end." The Gospel records what Jesus *began* to do and teach, the Acts records what He *continued* to do as the everliving King and Savior in heaven.

The title is really " Acts," or " Deeds " (not " The Acts," as if it recorded all the acts of all the Apostles), " for the narrative is indeed a succession of worthy acts, a story of some of the heroic deeds of the first Christian generation." — *Prof. Geo. H. Gilbert.* It is a book of moral battles and victories, the greatest victories with the mightiest issues recorded in history.

I. **The Author** was Luke, a physician, Greek by birth, a Jewish proselyte. Harnack thinks he was a native of Antioch. He was a cultured and educated man, well read in Greek literature, and giving evidence of literary power. The Acts is said to be the most perfect church history ever written. He was a " lovable man," called by Paul " the beloved physician " ; and modest, for he does not once mention his own name.

II. **The Date of Writing** was almost certainly about A.D. 63, for the narrative breaks off abruptly at the end of Paul's two years' residence at Rome (his first imprisonment). Why is this ? Evidently because there is no more to tell at the time. The writer continues his history up to the date of his writing and stops there. If he had been writing after the death of Paul, he would certainly have told us of the circumstances of his death. There is no rational explanation of this abrupt ending, except that the book was written about the time when the story closes. So Harnack, Rackham, Ramsay and many others. The tendency of scholars is in this direction.

III. **The Place of Writing** may have been Rome, according to the common view since Jerome. He may well have written it while he was with Paul the prisoner, living in his own hired house.

IV. **The Language** was Greek, " not the literary Greek familiar to classical scholars, but the speech of common life in and about the eastern Mediterranean." — *J. Vernon Bartlett, M.A.*, in *The Apostolic Age.*

V. **Method of Publication.** " There was no printing press, but books were quickly and inexpensively made. Every publisher kept a large number of slaves who were trained penmen, and to these the work which was to be published was dictated. As one read, hundreds wrote, and when the reader had finished there were so many hundreds of copies ready to be put on the market. The book trade throughout the empire was large and important. There were many publishing houses, bookstores, and public libraries in the cities." " Pliny's correspondence is full of references to the custom of ' publishing ' a book by reading it aloud to a group of friends."

VI. **The Extent of the History in Time** covers about thirty-two or thirty-three years, or one generation, from the resurrection of Jesus to the close of the first imprisonment of Paul.

VII. **The Geographical Extent of the History** carries us over nearly the whole Roman world. It begins at Jerusalem, extends over Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Macedonia in Europe, Greece and Rome.

VIII. **The Sources.** As Luke expressly says in the preface to his Gospel that he derived his information from the records of eye-witnesses, with which he was perfectly familiar, the same is doubtless true of his treatise on the Acts of the apostles.

For the first twelve chapters Luke must have depended upon the oral or written reports of those who were acquainted with the facts. Here, as in the case of the first three Gospels, there were doubtless various written statements. Those who represent Mark's Gospel, and an early edition of Matthew's, as the only written early documents base their arguments on a strong improbability, and not on facts.

For the four passages called the "We" sections (Acts 16 : 10–17 ; 20 : 5–15 ; 21 : 1–18 ; 27 : 1–28 : 16), containing ninety-seven verses in all, Luke had his personal experience and observation, recorded in his own notes, and in his memory which would be assisted by Paul, with whom he was in the closest intimacy of companionship.

COMMENTARIES ON THE ACTS.

Prof. R. J. Knowling's *Acts of the Apostles*, vol. II. of the *Expositor's Greek Testament* series. It is bound with Romans and First Corinthians. ($5. Geo. H. Doran. New York.) The text is Greek. The notes are full. There are many references to the modern literature of the subject. Professor Ramsay places it first of all.

Westminster Commentaries, Acts of the Apostles, by R. B. Rackham. ($4.50. Methuen & Co. London.)

The familiar commentaries, — *The Expositor's Bible* (price reduced to 50 cts.), *Cambridge Bible, Bible Commentary, Pulpit Commentary, Alexander on Acts.*

The New Century Bible: Acts, by J. Vernon Bartlet, M.A. (75 cts. Oxford University Press. New York.)

The Westminster New Testament: Acts, by Prof. H. Andrews, B.A. (75 cts. Revell.)

The Bible for Home and School: Acts, by Prof. Geo. H. Gilbert. (75 cts. Macmillan.)

Rev. Frederic Rendall, M.A., Assistant Master of Harrow School, has sent forth *The Acts of the Apostles in Greek and English.* It is divided into two parts : one with the Greek text, and comments ; the other with a translation of his own, with comments. ($2.25. Macmillan.)

The Acts of the Apostles. A Commentary for English Readers. By W. M. Furneaux. ($2.90. Oxford University Press. New York.)

The American Commentary on the Acts, by Prof. H. B. Hackett, in one vol. with *Romans*, by Dr. Arnold. ($3.25. Amer. Bapt. Pub. Soc.)

The Teacher's Commentary: Acts, by F. N. Peloubet, D.D. ($1.25. Oxford University Press, N. Y.)

The One Volume Commentary, edited by J. R. Dummelow. ($2.50. Macmillan.)

Lyman Abbott's *Commentary on the Acts.* ($1.50. A. S. Barnes & Co., N. Y.)

Word Studies in the New Testament, Synoptic Gospels and the Acts, by Prof. Marvin R. Vincent. (4 vols., $4.00 each. Scribner's. A special price of $8.00 for the 4 vols. is now made.)

Great Texts of the Bible, edited by James Hastings, D.D. (The vol. on Acts–Rom. I–VIII. $3.00 net. Scribner's.)

The Early Church, Studies in the Acts. By David and Joseph Burrell. (Am. Tract Soc. Perhaps out of print.)

Alexander Maclaren's Expositions of Scripture, Acts. ($1.25. Doran, N. Y.)

The International Critical Commentary on Acts is not yet issued at the time this book is published.

COMMENTARIES ON THE EPISTLES.

These will be given in connection with the separate lessons.

Farrar's *Messages of the Books* ($3.50, Dutton) gives the most brilliant and helpful story of each book as a whole.

RECENT WORKS ON THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL.

The Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day, by Sir William Ramsay, D.C.L., LL.D., D.D., 1914. "The influence of St. Paul in modern Christianity is becoming more and more appreciated." Opposed to Deissmann. ($3.00. Doran. New York.)

St. Paul, a Study in Social and Religious History, by Prof. Adolf Deissmann, D.D. ($3.50. Doran.)

St. Paul the Traveller, by Professor Ramsay. ($3.00. Putnam's.)

The Cities of St. Paul, by Professor Ramsay. ($1.50. Doran.)

The Spiritual Development of St. Paul, by Dr. George Matheson, the blind preacher of Edinboro'.

St. Paul the Orator, by Maurice Jones. (1910. $1.50. Doran.)

The Religious Experience of St. Paul, by Percy Gardner of Oxford. ($1.50. Putnam's.)

Pauline and Other Studies, by Professor Ramsay. ($1.50. Doran.)

The Testimony of Paul to Christ, by Prof. R. J. Knowling. (1905. $2.50. Doran.)

Studies of Paul and his Gospel, by Principal A. E. Garvie. ($1.00. Doran.)

Devotional Hours with the Bible, Vol. VIII. Readings from Acts, Epistles and Revelation. By J. R. Miller, D.D. ($1.25. Doran.)

Rev. Dr. J. R. Miller's devotional spirit and easy style give his volume on *Paul's Message of To-day*, an impression of intimacy and application to everyday experiences. ($1.25. Doran.)

Paul of Tarsus, by Robert Bird, presents the story of his life in modern picturesque language to make the history attractive to children. ($1.50. Scribner's.)

St. Paul and Christianity. By Arthur C. Headlam, D.D., Professor of Dogmatic Theology in King's College, London. The purpose of this book is to examine the writings of St. Paul as a whole in the light of other early Christian teaching, and to show, as the writer maintains, that Paulinism does not represent any new departure in Christian thought.

Farrar's *Life and Work of St. Paul* (E. P. Dutton, all prices) and Wm. M. Taylor's *Paul the Missionary* (50 cts., Harpers, New York) are popular, interesting, and instructive.

Studies of the Man Paul, by Dr. Robert E. Speer. (60 cts. Revell.)

Moral Paradoxes of St. Paul, by W. L. Watkinson, D.D. Dr. Watkinson has never done better. He accords the great Apostle a more penetrative interpretation than has possibly ever been given before. The whole book fairly scintillates with gems of vivid and apt illustration. ($1.00. Revell.)

Lewin's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul* is scholarly, and valuable to one who can find it. It is, however, out of print, and obtainable only through libraries or second-hand book-stores.

The Life of St. Paul. Prof. James Stalker. (60 cts. American Tract Society, N. Y.)

Paul in Every Day Life. John D. Adam. (50 cts. Y.M.C.A. Press, N. Y.)

Poems. *The Epic of Saul*, by Prof. W. C. Wilkinson (1891), is a story of the conversion of Paul, embodying the account given in the Acts, but showing the possible steps to this end, and the probable workings and conflicts of his mind. The picture is made very vivid. (Amer. Baptist Pub. Co. $1.00 postpaid.)

The Epic of Paul, by Prof. W. C. Wilkinson (1897), is a similar poem on the later portion of Paul's life. It presents a living portrait of the man Paul amid these dramatic scenes. (Amer. Baptist Pub. Co. $1.00 postpaid.)

RECENT LITERATURE ON THE APOSTOLIC AGE AND THE EARLY CHURCH.

The Holy Land of Asia Minor, by Dr. F. E. Clark. ($1.00. Scribner's. 1914.) A most interesting account of the present condition of the region of the seven churches spoken of in the Revelation.

Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul (Macmillan, $2.50 net), has been prepared by Prof. T. G. Tucker of the University of Melbourne. Much of his material is drawn from Pompeii and Herculaneum.

A Synchronic Chart of Early Apostolic History, by George E. Groscup, B.A., D.C.L. "The Acts of the Apostles made visible." A complete picture in colors of the Events recorded in the "Acts of the Apostles" correlated with the General History of the Age. Size 10 × 23 inches, but neatly folded in a cover, so that it can be read page by page, or drawn out into full view. The time and place of the writing of Paul's Letters are also given. A series of eleven key maps gives the geographical setting of the history, showing all important places named, as well as the journeys of Paul. (Price 25 cts. postpaid.)

Sir William M. Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*. ($3.00. Putnam's.)

The Dawn of Christianity, or Studies of the Apostolic Church, by H. C. Vedder. (American Baptist Publishing Society, 50 cts. net.)

Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries, by Adolph Harnack. (2 vols. $6. Putnam's.)

Pictures of the Apostolic Church, by Sir William Ramsay. ($1.50. Sun. Schl. Times Co.)

Acts of the Holy Spirit, by Dr. A. T. Pierson. 75 cts. (Revell.)

In the *Ten Epochs of Church History*, the volume on *The Apostolic Age* is by James Vernon Bartlet, M.A., lecturer in church history in Mansfield College, Oxford. It is a suggestive and helpful volume in a series of popular monographs. ($2.00. Scribner's.)

The Early Christian Martyrs and Their Persecutions, by Prof. J. Herkless, D.D., Temple Series. (30 cts. Lippincott.)

History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age, by Prof. McGiffert, of Union Theo. Sem., N. Y. ($2.50. Scribner's.)

St. Peter the Apostle of Asia, by W. S. Auchincloss. ($1.00. Van Nostrand and Co., New York.)

Apostolic Age of the Christian Church, by Prof. Carl von Weiszäcker. (2 vols. $7.00. Putnam's.)

The Early Days of Christianity, by F. W. Farrar. ($1.75. Funk and Wagnalls.)

Professor Ramsay's *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament* consists of a series of lectures at the Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va. ($3.00. Doran, New York.)

SECULAR HISTORIANS OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE. Tacitus' *Annals* XV : 4, 4 (born A.D. 54. Annals published about 115). Josephus' *Antiq.* XVIII : 3, 3 ; 5, 2 ; XX : 9, 1 (born 37 or 38. Antiquities completed about 93 or 94). Suetonius' *Lives of the Cæsars*, "Nero" (written about 120).

The Romance of Bible Chronology, by Rev. Martin Anstey, B.D., M.A. (2 vols. $2.75. Marshall Bros.). It contains a revised chronology derived from the Bible alone, varying not very much from Ussher's ; and a comparative chronology dealing with other sources. Presented in a graphic or panoramic form.

HISTORICAL STORIES.

F. W. Farrar's *Darkness and Dawn*, or "Scenes in the days of Nero." (Longmans Green.) $2.00.

RECENT ONE-VOLUME BIBLE DICTIONARIES

The Dictionary of the Bible. Edited by James Hastings, D.D. Complete in one volume. 992 pages, 7½ by 5¼ inches. No illustrations and proper names not pronounced. Three colored maps in the text, two of them fine, large double-paged. Full discussions. 1909 (Scribner's, $6.00).

The International Bible Dictionary. 800 pp., 500 unusually good explanatory illustrations and charts, colored maps, new clear type, proper names pronounced. This is Dr. Wm. Smith's Condensed Dictionary revised up to the most recent accepted Biblical Research, under the editorship of F. N. Peloubet, D.D., assisted by Alice D. Adams, M.A., 1912 ($2.40 and $5.00, John C. Winston Company, Philadelphia).

The Standard Bible Dictionary. 920 pages, 8½ by 5½ inches. Somewhat larger and clearer type than the other dictionaries. 460 unusually good explanatory illustrations. Proper names pronounced by respelling. 9 colored maps and 23 plain maps and plans scattered throughout the text. Thumb index. Summaries of the articles. 1909 (Funk & Wagnalls, $6.00).

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE DICTIONARY. 975 pages, 7¼ by 4½ inches. 365 excellent illustrations. Pronunciation of proper names so far as to mark the accented syllables, 13 colored and 23 plain maps, in text. The long articles printed in two solid columns. 1908 (Dutton, $5.00).

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758 The Apostles preaching in Jerusalem.

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452 St. Paul. Fra Bartolommeo.

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763 St. John and St. Peter. Durer.

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395 St. Stephen. Philip de Champaigne.

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739 Philip and the Eunuch.
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Lesson 13.

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302 Jaffa. House of Simon the Tanner.
684 Vision of St. Peter.

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Lesson 7.

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237 The Book of the Law.

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192 Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives.

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764 The Place of Prayer by the Riverside.

Lesson 11.

544 Parable of the Sower. S. Wale.

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738 Conversion of the Philippian Jailer.

Lesson 13.

REVIEW.

Third Quarter.

Lesson 1.

445 St. Paul preaching to the Thessalonians. Doré.

Lesson 2.

765 Thessalonica.

Lesson 3.

460 Paul preaching at Athens. Raphael.
457 Mars' Hill. Athens.

Lesson 4.

456 Corinth. The Acro Corinthus.

Lesson 5.

540 Shepherd of Jerusalem. P. R. Morris.

Lesson 6.

647 The Christian Graces. George E. Hicks.

Lesson 7.

766 Christians pressing their Gifts on Paul.

Lesson 8.

449 St. Paul preaching at Ephesus. Lesueur.

Lesson 9.

767 Paul parting with the Elders at Miletus.

Lesson 10.

304 Pozzuoli. Place where Paul landed as a prisoner on his way to Rome.
768 Paul let down in a basket.

Lesson 11.

446 St. Paul Rescued from the Multitude. Doré.

Lesson 12.

769 Paul is bound by Roman Soldiers.

Lesson 13.

REVIEW.

Fourth Quarter.

Lesson 1.

311 Cæsarea. St. Paul's prison.

Lesson 2.

770 Paul before Felix and Drusilla.

Lesson 3.

651 Paul before Festus. Hogarth.

Lesson 4.

771 Paul before Agrippa.

Lesson 5.

772 Paul a Prisoner. The Voyage.

Lesson 6.

447 St. Paul shipwrecked. Doré.

Lesson 7.

670 Temperance Pledge.

Lesson 8.

773 Paul's arrival at Rome. Julius von Schnorr.

Lesson 9.

774 Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

Lesson 10.

Map of Asia Minor in the time of Paul.
("The Seven Churches which are in Asia.")

Lesson 11.

278 St. John the Evangelist. Carlo Dolci.

Lesson 12.

279 Vision of St. John the Evangelist on the Isle of Patmos. Carlo Dolci.

Lesson 13.

11. The Arrival of the Shepherds. H. Lerolle.

Lesson 14.

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THE MOUNT OF OLIVES FROM JERUSALEM

JANUARY 2 — MARCH 26, 1916.

LESSON I. — January 2.

THE ASCENDING LORD. — Acts 1 : 1–14.

COMMIT vs. 10, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men.* — EPH. 4 : 8.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

There are two things which the teacher should keep in mind all through this year's course.

First, he needs to treat each lesson as a part of the history of the founding of the Christian Church, noting the various stages of its growth and development, in numbers, in influential men, in understanding the teaching of Jesus, and in the providences of God.

In the *second* place he should lead his scholars to see the two great forces that made the church, that were back of all it was and of all it accomplished. Trace these two forces all through its history and see what they are doing to-day.

Notebooks for each scholar will be a great aid. Trace every journey and show every place on the map, showing its relations to the history.

Be sure and discuss the subjects with the scholars; and their relations to themselves and modern times.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 7, 8, 9, 11.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — About the middle of May, A.D. 30. Forty days after the crucifixion in April.

Place. — The Ascension was from the Mount of Olives, near Bethany.

The Meeting Place of the 120 disciples was an upper room in Jerusalem.

The Place in History was the close of the earthly life of Jesus the Christ.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*, "For I dipt into the Future, far as human eye could see."

Longfellow's *Arsenal at Springfield.*

Margaret Wilkinson's Poem, "Have we seen her, the New City?"

THE LESSON IN ART.

The Ascension, Hofmann,* Rembrandt,* Raphael Mengs,* Doré, Biermann, Colletti, Tintoretto. La Farge (in the Church of the Ascension in New York City). Tissot's *Life of our Lord*, two pictures of the Ascension.

* In Wilde's Bible pictures.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Our Risen and Ascended Lord, Our Everliving Leader and King.

I. THE CONVINCING PROOF THAT JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD, Vs. 1–3.
II. THE LAST GATHERING OF THE DISCIPLES WITH JESUS IN GALILEE, Vs. 4, 5.
III. JESUS MEETS HIS DISCIPLES ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES. QUESTIONINGS, Vs. 6–8.
IV. THE ASCENSION, V. 9.
V. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST, Vs. 10, 11.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The *Commentaries on the Acts* noted in the Introduction.

The Coming Presence by Dr. F. M. Thomas (Revell). Milligan's *Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord* " still remains the most exhaustive book in English on the theological aspects of this subject." Hastings's *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels* has an excellent article on the Ascension.

Professor Thomson's *Brain and Personality* proves scientifically the separate existence of body and soul (Dodd & Mead). The same truth is finely set forth by Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures, Biology*, " Does Death End All ? " (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The Book of the Acts.
The Promise of the Father.
Restoring the Kingdom to Israel.
Ye shall be witnesses unto Jesus to all the world.
The Ascension.
The coming again of Jesus.
The time unknown, and why.
The prayer meeting.

At Niagara Falls, down a hundred feet below the surface, there are two great dynamos of immense power. They are seldom seen, they scarcely enter the thoughts of the citizens who live in the houses, or throng the streets of the city. And yet those dynamos, charged with energy by the river above which is created by the rains from the heavens, are the source of the power that lights the houses and streets of the city, drives the electric cars, and turns the wheels of factories.

This is but a faint picture of the two divine powers which are the source of all that Christianity has done and is doing all over the world; the forces behind the greatest era in the history of man; the means through which the Christian religion has gained its redeeming power to save men and to cause the kingdom of God to come on earth as it is in heaven.

The First Power IS JESUS CHRIST, THE EVERLIVING SON OF GOD, OUR DIVINE SAVIOUR, OUR SUPREME LEADER, OUR TEACHER AND OUR KING. AS DESCRIBED IN THE FIRST 14 VERSES OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, AND IN ISAIAH 9 : 6, 7.

The Second Power IS THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE PERSONAL PRESENCE OF GOD, THE COMFORTER, THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND OF LIFE, THE SOURCE OF THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT.

This second power is the subject of our next lesson.

SUBJECT. Our Risen and Everliving Leader and Saviour and King, the Son of God and the Son of Man, by Whom God's Kingdom is to Come on Earth as it is in Heaven.

I. **CONVINCING PROOF THAT JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD, WITH THE SAME BODY WHICH WAS CRUCIFIED AND BURIED**, vs. 1–3. **The former treatise I have made**, the Gospel according to Luke, dedicated to the same Roman officer, **Theophilus**, " lover of God." " Since in Luke 1 : 3 he is called ' most excellent,' and since this title is given to the Roman governors Felix and Festus (23 : 26; 24 : 3; 26 : 25 [Am. R.]) it has been thought that Theophilus also was a high official." — *Bible for Home and School.* **All that Jesus began both to do and teach**, implying " that the former treatise related what Jesus *began* to do and to teach; and this relates what he, the same Jesus, *continued* to do and to teach." — *Alford.* The Acts was the second volume of Luke's history. " The fact is both curious and significant that what is found in the Gospel Narratives, in the form of precept or teaching, reappears in the Acts of the Apostles in the form of practice or example." — *A. T. Pierson.*

2. **Until the day in which he was taken** (" received," Am. R.) **up.** Jesus continued *to do and to teach* for forty days after his crucifixion and resurrection. Luke's Gospel ends with the Ascension.

The apostles whom he had chosen. " Here the central human figures of the book are introduced, in marked subordination to the Divine Agent to whose working it is Luke's aim to direct attention as the source of the power and wisdom." — *New Century Bible.*

3. **To whom also he shewed himself.** Not merely " appeared," but showed himself, made himself appear. **Alive.** The same Jesus who was crucified, and with the same body as before his crucifixion, that bore the wounds of the cross, had flesh and bones, and ate as in former days. The great change of his body into a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15 : 51–54) seems to have occurred at the ascension.

THE former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

2. Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

3. To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God;

Infallible Proofs. One word in the original. Both Revisions leave out the adjective "infallible," and use simply *proofs*. But this English word alone is not as strong as the Greek word. For while it may mean "Evidence and argumentation putting the conclusion beyond reasonable doubt," it also may mean "demonstration, perfect or imperfect" — (*Century Dictionary*); while the original Greek word means "convincing, certain, evidence." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* "That from which something is surely and plainly known; an indubitable evidence; a proof." — *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon.* "The Greek word signifies some sign or token manifest to the senses, as opposed to evidence given by witnesses." — *Cambridge Bible.* But the single Greek word, translated *infallible proofs*, is used frequently by Plato and Aristotle, and denotes "the strongest proofs of which a subject is capable," "an irresistible proof." — *Schaff.* "Used by Aristotle (*Rhet.* i., 2) for proofs that carried certainty of conviction with them, as contrasted with those that were only probable or circumstantial." — *Ellicott.* "The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the best attested fact in history." — *Lyman Abbott.*

Being seen of them forty days at intervals, on ten or eleven different occasions; (Am. R., "Appearing to them by the space of forty days"); a sufficient number of times to make assurance doubly sure that Jesus was alive from the dead. And he proved his living presence by **speaking** to them **the things pertaining to** ("concerning," Am. R.) **the Kingdom of God.**

The Resurrection of Jesus is the Crowning Proof that he is alive now, that he is the Son of God, the living Saviour our Leader and King, sitting on the right hand of God (Rom. 8 : 34; Col. 3 : 1), seated with the Father in his throne (Rev. 3 : 21; 22 : 1). If he could not conquer death, and come back from heaven, he could not prove that at the first he came from heaven. Canon Liddon says, "The resurrection of Christ is the certificate of our Lord's mission from heaven, to which he himself pointed as a warrant of his claims."

It is the proof that he is the promised Messiah, proclaimed in the Old Testament as an everlasting king, whose reign should never end, the Saviour and Redeemer of men. In no other way could they present Jesus to the Jews as their Messiah, with the least hope of their believing in him. Without the fact of the resurrection it would not only be impossible to understand by what Christianity originated and progressed till the present day, but the facts themselves would have been impossible. It was impossible to build up a kingdom with a dead king, a mere memory, as its ruler.

The little Syrian boy said to Dr. Knight at Smyrna, — "Jesus? Jesus? I know — he prophet; he good prophet. But he dead now."

"*Vivit! Vivit!*" It is said that Martin Luther wrote on the wall of his room the Latin words, "Vivit! Vivit!" "He lives! He lives!"

There is nothing unnatural in this event. Nothing that strains our faith. But on the contrary, an act of God like this, or like the miracles of Jesus, strengthens and upholds faith. There is no way to prove that any act or event is wrought by God, except by its being something that only God can do; just as we know that certain things are done by man, because no lower animal, no laws of nature, could do them. When Robinson Crusoe saw the footprint of a man on his desert island, he *knew* it was a man that made it. I find a garden blooming in a desert, or a house built in a forest, and I have infallible proof that they were made by a human being, not by lower animals, nor by the laws of Nature.

By the same reasoning the Word made flesh, the miracles He wrought, the raising of the body that died on the cross to be united again with the same living spirit, are "infallible proofs" that He is the divine Son of God, dwelling among us full of grace and truth

4. And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me.

And the proof is doubly strong to us who see what has been wrought in the world. It is a matter of fact that only those denominations who accept, believe in, preach and follow the Divine Leader and Saviour and King, succeed in rescue work or Foreign Missions.

Dr. Holland once wrote in *Scribner's Magazine:* "The wicked, selfish, degraded world we live in can never be under very great obligation to a religious teacher who laughs at the phrase, 'a change of heart.' As soon as a man realizes the necessity of such a change for himself and the world, he realizes the necessity of holding as the central figure of his religious system something more than a 'Hebrew philosopher.' There is not one of them who does not need to be saved, and who does not know that the process of salvation involves a revolution, or a reformation, or a regeneration — a change, possibly, that combines all these processes. They are weak, and need help; they are sinful, and need pardon; they are lost, and need to be saved. To tell such people that a 'Hebrew philosopher,' who pretended to be inspired and to teach with

From a photograph by Wilson.

The Valley of the Kidron.

Jerusalem on the left — Mount of Olives on the right.

authority, but who was in reality only a good man, can save them, is to feed starving men with chaff.

"Only his God can be his Saviour, and his Saviour must be his God. Hence the mightier the Christ of a Church is, the mightier the Church as an influence for good in the world."

Professor Edward E. Hale Jr., giving an account of his conversion, said: "I had formerly thought of Jesus Christ as one who had been a wise teacher and an ideal character. I had thought that by appropriating and using the wisdom of his teaching people could aim at his character and grow to likeness to it. Now I thought of Jesus as one who was a still living Teacher, so far as he was concerned, but also a good deal more than that; not only Teacher, but Friend, Master, Saviour. That was the fundamental belief. I found the main thing was to think of Jesus as a living spiritual power. One couldn't get along without that."

II. **THE LAST GATHERING OF THE DISCIPLES WITH JESUS IN GALILEE**, vs. 4, 5. **Being assembled together** at a mountain in Galilee. Matt. 28 : 16–20. **Should not depart from Jerusalem.** From Galilee they were to go to Jerusalem, which was to be their headquarters for some time. Here they were to wait till they received **the promise of the Father**, the gift of the Holy Spirit, John 14 : 16–20, 26; 15: 26, 27; 16 : 13, 14. Also made in the Old Testament, Isa. 44 : 3; Ezek. 36 : 27; Joel 2 : 28–32. This promise is the subject of our next lesson.

Waiting. For this promise they were to **wait.** They waited by prayer, by conference together, by doing necessary duties (vs. 13, 14, and the rest of the chapter). Waiting

5. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7. And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

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is not sleeping or folding the hands in idleness, but implies doing all that is in one's power to bring to pass the thing waited for. It was a time of needful preparation, getting hearts, minds and thoughts settled.

5. Jesus kept up their courage by the assurance in this verse. **For John** the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, **truly** ("indeed," Am. R.) **baptized with water**, the symbol and type of a higher and better baptism. While John was baptizing with water, he pointed to Jesus as the one who should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire (Matt. 3:11). Jesus now says that this promise is about to be fulfilled. **Ye shall be baptized with** (or in) **the Holy Ghost** ("Spirit" in Am. R. as always). Not that this would be the first time that the Holy Spirit had been received, but that the influence would come with peculiar manifestations, in great abundance, and upon all disciples.

III. **ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES. JESUS' LAST WORDS TO HIS DISCIPLES. THE QUESTION THAT WEIGHED ON THEIR HEARTS**, vs. 6–8. **When therefore they were come together**, after they had returned from their interview in Galilee with Jesus, to Jerusalem; from whence in due time they assembled again on the mount of Olives near Bethany (vs. 12; Luke 24:50). **They asked.** Kept asking, "the imperfect denoting a repetition of the question." — *Professor Vincent.* "Perhaps indicating that the same question was put by one inquirer after another." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **Lord, wilt thou** (Am. R. "dost thou") **at this time restore again** (Am. R. omits "again") **the kingdom to Israel?** As promised again and again in the Scriptures, including Joel, referred to in vs. 4, 5, "to be realized by the annihilation of the enemies of God and victory and happiness for the good." "The apostles are really repeating a question they had asked before (Matt. 24:3; Mk. 13:4), 'When shall be thy coming and the end of the world?'" — *Rackham.* The people were expecting the establishment of the Messianic kingdom. "This eager expectation," says Professor Stokes, "dominated every other feeling in the Jewish mind, and was burned into the very secrets of their existence by the tyranny of the Roman rule." The disciples probably imagined that the world would be converted to Judaism, and that Jerusalem, the holy city, would be the resort of all nations, the centre of light and power and religion for the world. They probably had no conception, and could not have, of any other way in which the hopes of the Jews and the promises of the Bible could be accomplished. But these thoughts were also mingled with higher thoughts of turning from sin, and righteousness, and "the disciples may well have shared, even if imperfectly, in the hopes of a Zacharias or a Simeon." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.*

The promises of this kingdom run all through the Old Testament and the teaching of Jesus. *The disciples were not mistaken as to the fact, but only as to the nature of the kingdom, and the method of its coming.*

7. **And he said**, implying that their general expectation of some kind of restoration was correct. At the same time it **is not for you to know** (**the**) **times**, periods, when they come and how long they last, **and** (**the**) **seasons**, critical occasions, moral movements, epochs. **Which the Father hath put in** (Am. R. "set within") **his own**, his private, personal **power** (Am. R. "authority"). The Greek word used here for "power," exousía, is different from the word "power" in v. 8. "Authority" only partially expresses the meaning. It means *absolute disposal.* — *Cambridge Bible. Power of choice, liberty of doing as one pleases, physical and mental power. The power of authority, and of right, of rule or government.* — *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon.*

The Reasons why the Future was Hidden from the Apostles; and is Hidden from us.

1. It was impossible for them to see the future events as they really occurred. Their ideas, their point of view, their expectations, and the circumstances connected with the times and seasons would all have to be changed before it would be possible for any one to understand them. For instance, the knowledge of the fall of Jerusalem and of the Mosaic ritual would have staggered their faith. They could not under-

8. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

stand its part in the progress of Christianity. They could not see how all believers in Christ became a part of the True Israel and the restoration of its Kingdom (Rom. 11).

2. There were two lines of prophecy in relation to the restoration of the Kingdom, and the second coming of Jesus, in one of which this era is depicted as near, while the other points to a dim and distant future. They are not contradictory, but only two views of the same thing, which began very soon, had various eras, and is to be consummated at the end of the world. So that all the practical power of an imminent coming, and of a great transcendent event to be labored for and hoped for, is brought to bear upon the disciples of Christ.

3. The knowledge of times and seasons would have been worse than useless to them. It would have taken their thoughts away from their work, and interested them in useless questions. This is justified by the apostolic experience as shown in the second epistle to the Thessalonians.

"Oh, blindness to the Future! kindly given,
That each may fill the circle marked by heaven." — *Pope.*

4. The same is true of all great moral changes. The history of Christianity is full of these changes, and we are still in the midst of them. The changes in thought and feeling and attitude toward many questions, from old to new, are like the changes in the seasons, where no one can possibly tell by observation the exact time when winter ends and spring begins, or when spring ends and summer begins.

But Jesus Gave His Disciples Something far Better than They Asked, — Power to Restore the Kingdom. 8. **Ye shall receive power**, Greek *dunamin*, of which our word "dynamite" is almost a transliteration, expressing the greatness of the power to upheave obstacles, and accomplish great results. *It is inherent power residing in a person or thing by virtue of its nature. — Thayer's Lexicon.* This power came through the Holy Spirit sent in abundance on Pentecost, and abiding in Christ's disciples ever since as fully as they are fitted to receive Him.

Church of the Ascension. Mount of Olives.
Erected to mark the last footprints of our Lord on earth.

The Work of the Apostles. **And ye shall be witnesses unto me.** Am. R. "My witnesses." The Greek for Witnesses, *martyres*, is our English martyrs, those who bear witness even though it costs their life. The disciples bore witness to the nature of Jesus, to his works, his teachings, his death and resurrection. The religion of Christ is based on facts, not theories. These facts were repeated orally, but were soon put into writing (Luke 1: 1–3) by various persons, and at length took the form of our Gospels. They were to bear witness all over the world.

Witnessing is still the most effective way of preaching Jesus and his Gospel. The witness is to what Jesus has actually done for us, to the fulfilment of his promises, to his conscious presence, to his power to save from sin, to help in trouble, to the transformations he has wrought in character and life.

We witness by our words, our actions, our characters.

IV. **THE ASCENSION**, v. 9. **While they beheld.** That they might have clear proof of his ascension, to assure them that there was no deception. He was in the act of blessing them when **he was taken up** (Luke 24: 51). **A cloud received him out of**

9. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

their sight. (Compare Matt. 17 : 5; Luke 9 : 34.) The cloud was like the Shekinah light over the tabernacle, and the Holy of Holies of the temple, like Elijah's storm chariot, and the bright cloud of glory which overshadowed him on the Mount of Transfiguration.

"He climbed Love's ladder so high
From the round at the top he stepped to the sky."

It was at this time, doubtless, that the great change came over his body described in 1 Cor. 15 : 51–53. For such a change is signified by his appearance as John saw him (Rev. 1 : 12–16).

The Importance of the Ascension. A delegation of Sioux Indians "was present at a public meeting in the Philadelphia Academy of Music. The chief, Red Cloud, whose burly form and natural eloquence had attracted much attention, was called upon to speak. Turning to Mr. G. H. Stuart, he said: 'Red Cloud wants to ask you one question, Who made us? Did you ever see the Great Spirit or his Son? You have told Red Cloud that the Great Spirit came down from heaven and dwelt among the white men, and that he went up again. [Pondering for a few minutes.] What did he go up again for? Red Cloud has come, and he wants to find out.' Probably the Indian has not been alone in his difficulty."

1. It is the one fitting ending to the earthly life of Jesus. Coming from the Father he returns to the Father.
2. The last view of Jesus is not on the cross, but going home in glory.
3. It kept before the disciples the fact that he is their everliving Saviour. We do not worship and serve and trust a dead Saviour, but one who is alive forevermore.
4. "It enables us to realize his divinity, without losing his humanity."
5. It gives us the true idea of his kingdom as a spiritual kingdom of righteousness.
6. The doctrine of the ascension, with its hope of future glory, with its transfigured Son of man on the throne, "adds new dignity to life," for the lowliest shall be changed into the likeness of his glorified body. "It is an everflowing fountain of dignity, of purity, of mercy."

As we stand on Mt. Olivet with the disciples gazing at our ascending Lord, the closing act of the most wonderful Life ever lived on earth; and then turn our thoughts backward over his whole career, — we see the perfect ideal of a Redeemer of the world, made real. Nothing equal to it has ever been even conceived in the mind of man, much less been realized.

If we ask ourselves what things we need in a Saviour, we will find, —

1. That we need one who can speak with the authority of knowledge and experience, about God, and heaven, and the life beyond the grave. John 1 : 1–4, 14.
2. We need a Saviour who loves us with an everlasting, measureless love, however unworthy we have been. John 3 : 16.
3. We need forgiveness of our sins, that in some way they may be blotted out forever, removed from us as far as the East from the West.
4. We need a new heart, a new life that makes us hate sin, and makes right living as natural to us as breathing, or as the song to a bird.
5. We need every motive of love, duty, fear, hope, that can inspire us and give us the victory over evil.
6. We need an ideal, an example, that shall make clear to us what we ought to be and to do; to see righteousness and love and grace and truth actually worked out before us in this very world in which we live, a goal toward which to move.
7. We need the Holy Spirit of God, as the wintry fields need the warm spring sun, the Spirit that gives life, and light, and guidance and inspiration to every good word and work. "More life and fuller, that we want," that satisfies the religious hunger of the soul.
8. We need a Leader, wise, strong, heroic, whom we can love and honor and obey, and follow with patriotic loyalty; who will lead us to certain triumph over all evil in ourselves and in the world.
9. We need a human Saviour, who can sympathize with us, who "has been touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin." (Heb. 4 : 15.) One whom we can meet and love as a friend and teacher.

10. And, while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11. Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

10. We need a Divine Saviour, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, proving that he is the Son of God by his works that no mere man could do.

There is but one person in all history of whom the above is true. *Jesus Christ, the Word of God, who became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Note (1) That we have compared our religion with all the other religions of the world.

(2) There is good in the great non-Christian religions; but we find that there is no good in any other religion that is not found also, and in purer and completer form, in Christianity.

(3) Only Christianity gathers up into itself all the good of all the religions of the world.

(4) There is good in Christianity that is not to be found in any of the non-Christian religions. — From *Robert E. Speer.*

V. **THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST: OUR IDEAL AND GOAL**, vs. 10, 11. **While they looked stedfastly toward heaven** (Am. R., "were looking stedfastly into heaven,") **as he went**, was going. "The present tense denotes that the cloud was still visible for a considerable time, as if carrying their eyes and their hearts with him to heaven." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* They gazed with intense eagerness, questioning what it all meant. **Behold.** Implying suddenness. **Two men.** Angels in the form of men. (Compare Matt. 28 : 2–5 with Luke 24 : 4.) **In white apparel.** Like the angel in Matt. 28 : 3, "his raiment white as snow," and "in shining garments," expressing the purity of their character. They were God's messengers bringing hope and comfort to the gazing disciples.

The Message. 11. **Ye men of Galilee.** All the living apostles were Galileans; Judas of Judea was dead. **This same Jesus which is taken up from you . . . shall so come in like manner.** Visibly, openly, gloriously, triumphantly. This apparently refers to the final coming of our Lord at the completion of his earthly mission, as Jesus said in Matthew 26 : 64, "Henceforth [Greek 'from this time on'] ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven." They would recognize Jesus as King in all the events that take place till the consummation of all things in a redeemed world.

1. The disciples, some at least, expected the second coming of Jesus to be near at hand. See I Thessalonians.

2. Jesus had said, as reported four times in the Gospels, that some of his hearers should not "taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom." (Matt. 16 : 27, 28.)

3. He also said that no one knew the times and seasons of his coming.

4. Others looked for his coming at the end of the world, the resurrection day, the final judgment, and the coming of his Kingdom as in Rev. 21 and 22.

5. That final coming has not yet arrived, even after 1900 years have passed.

6. But it is certain that it will come.

Note (1) That the disciples were not mistaken as to the fact, but only as to the method.

(2) That there is no contradiction in the statements.

For it is evident that the second coming of Christ is an *Era*, not a single detached event. It is a great long-continued Era, consisting of a series of epochs or marked stages each of which is rightfully and naturally called his second coming; just as when we speak of the coming of the day, we speak of it as having come when the first rays touch the mountain tops, or we think of it as having come when the sun rises, or again when the sun has burst through the clouds and we see the full blaze of day.

"Faster, and more fast,
O'er Night's brim, Day boils at last;
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim,
Where spurting and suppressed it lay —
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid gray
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away;
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,
Till the whole sunrise, not to be suppressed,
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then overflowed the world!"

12. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

13. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son* of Alpheus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas *the brother* of James.

14. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

First. Christ came again on the day of Pentecost. Dr. A. J. Gordon says that Christ's promise, "Lo, I am with you alway," was fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit, who will "abide with you forever." "And lest by this discourse about his going and the Comforter's coming we should be led to think that it is not Christ who is with us, he says, clearly referring to the Spirit, 'I will not leave you orphans: *I will come to you.*'"

Second. There was one stage of the second coming of Jesus at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70 described by him in Matthew 24 while some of the disciples were still living according to his promise. The description of this event and that of the end of the world or age seem to be intermingled because the same descriptions in many respects apply to both. It was necessary to the spread of Christianity that the Temple should be destroyed.

Third. There will be a second coming when the Gospel has triumphed over all the earth, and the millennium is ushered in, and the believers, scattered through many nations and organizations, shall become one visible kingdom, free, governed only by Jesus Christ and his heavenly principles. This is the full coming of the kingdom prophesied in Daniel and the Old Testament; this is the coming the later apostles were expecting; this is what John means when he prayed, "Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Fourth. There will be a coming of Christ, in visible presence, in some day of judgment and resurrection, as in 1 Thess. 4:13–18; Rev. 20:7 to 22:5; and Matt. 25. I cannot see how the Scriptures can be fulfilled without this; and some visible, external manifestation of Jesus in his glory to all beings, earthly and heavenly, at the end of the Gospel dispensation seems most fitting and natural.

Thus we see that the expectation of the immediate coming of their Lord was not a mistake of the apostles. They were not disappointed in their expectations, repeatedly expressed, of the return of Jesus. They did see the beginnings of that coming, its first rays. They did not understand the times and seasons, but they did know the fact. They did not recognize the coming since it came so gradually. They were right in looking for an early coming; they were also right in looking for one far away. The hope, the joy, the strength, the glory of the church, is in this promise of the coming again of Jesus, of the triumph of his cause, of his glorious reign.

This is the goal of the Church and of Christianity. We are not warring and laboring against hope, but with the certainty of the victory through an ever-living, ever-present Saviour.

"Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, 'Peace!'"

"Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,
The holy melodies of love arise." — *Henry W. Longfellow.*

"For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

"Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

"Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nation's airy navies grappling in the central blue;

"Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

"Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world." — *Tennyson.*

" Man wants a consummation so full and complete that God himself shall be vindicated before all intelligences in the universe. . . . It is the Christian doctrine of a Consummation which satisfies not only the head but the heart." — From Dr. Thomas' *The Coming Presence.*

Note. Vs. 13, 14 will be considered in the next lesson.

LESSON II. — January 9.

THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. — Acts 2 : 1–13.

COMMIT vs. 3, 4.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* — 1 COR. 3 : 16.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

" Something happened in the first century which changed the whole history of the world. I say, ' something ' happened, for, after all, it is events and the advent of personalities which alter the current of history." The first Personality was Jesus Christ risen from the dead as we saw in our last lesson.

In to-day's lesson we study the second personal power back of the Christian Religion in all ages, — the Holy Spirit of God.

Some one said that " the Church is behind the age." It is behind the age as the sun is behind the dawn bringing the day; and as the wind is behind the ship, — it makes it go. These two personalities are the powers working in Christianity to change the world.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 2–4; Zech. 4 : 6; Eph. 5 : 9.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Ten days after the Ascension in our last lesson. On the day of Pentecost 50 days after the Crucifixion. May 28, A.D. 30. On Sunday.

Place. —Jerusalem, in the Upper Chamber where the disciples were accustomed to assemble (1 : 13, 14).

THE ROUND TABLE.

The ten days of preparation.
The scene when the Holy Spirit came.
What special reasons for the manifestation of the Spirit to the senses.
The effects produced in the disciples.
The symbol of the Flame.
The symbol of the Tongue.
The symbol of the Wind.
The gift of speaking with tongues.
Why the list of different languages is given.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Second Power in Christianity for the Redemption of the World — the Coming of the Holy Spirit in Overflowing Abundance.

I. WAITING FOR THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER, 1 : 13–26.
II. THE SCENE ON PENTECOST, vs. 1–3.
III. INFALLIBLE PROOFS OF THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, v. 4.
IV. THE SYMBOLS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
V. THE TWO POWERS, THE RISEN CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, MAKING THE GOSPEL KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, vs. 5–12.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Note on the *Gift of Tongues*, by Professor Knowling in the *Expositor's Greek Testament. Our Supreme Leader*, " The Holy Spirit," by Professor F. B. Denio. *The Gift of Tongues*, by Professor Dawson Walker, D.D., of the University of Durham, England. (T. and T. Clark.) Dr. Pierson's *Acts of the Holy Spirit.* Hare's *Mission of the Comforter. The Spirit Filled Life*, by Rev. John MacNeil. Several *sermons* in the volumes by Spurgeon. *Through the Eternal Spirit* by Rev. J. E. Cumming, D.D. Arthur's *Tongue of Fire.*

HYMNS.

" Come Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove."
" Come Holy Spirit, Come."
" Holy Ghost, with light divine."
" Come Holy Ghost, in love."

THE LESSON IN ART.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit, by Fra Angelico,* Van der Werff,* Unknown Artist,* Giotto.

AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Every incident of this lesson is a vivid, stirring, living, moving, picture, and should be so presented to the class.

I. **WAITING FOR THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER**, 1:13–26. According to the command of Jesus.

The upper room, where the disciples assembled after the Ascension, was the familiar large upper room in Jerusalem. "It may have been in the house of Mary the mother of Mark (Acts 12:12)." — *Prof. Gilbert.*

The Assembly consisted of the eleven apostles, the brethren of Jesus (who earlier were unbelieving [John. 7:5] but had later, perhaps by the Resurrection, become convinced), with other disciples, making the number 120 (1:15), and with the women, probably including those who had ministered to Jesus during his ministry (Lu. 23:55; Matt. 28:1; Mk. 16:1; John 19:25) of whom Mary the mother of Jesus was the most notable.

From a sketch.

Stairs leading to an upper room.

The Prayer Meeting. They waited with one accord, one purpose, one faith in Jesus, continuing steadfastly in prayer, according to Jesus' promise that *where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;* and if even *two of them agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven*, how much more when 120 are of one accord. This was the true method of waiting. For by this attitude the disciples were prepared to receive the gift of the Spirit in large measures. There are two ways in which God answers prayer for spiritual gifts: (1) by the gift itself, (2) the other by making the soul capable of receiving the gift in full measure. Both kinds of answers were given to this praying company.

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

It is worth noting that in this prayer meeting there was an address by Peter, and later a business meeting for electing an apostle in place of Judas.

"The test of every spiritual experience is, 'How does it fit a man for ordinary affairs.' Peter trod the humble road of common toil, which looked as though it might lead away from the Lord, and found that it led right to him." — *J. H. Jowett.*

Library. Andrew Murray's *With Christ in the School of Prayer.* Arthur Pierson's *Lessons in the School of Prayer.*

II. **THE SCENE ON PENTECOST**, vs. 1–3. *Pentecost.* **And when the day of Pentecost was fully come** (Am. R., "now come"). "This was the morrow after the seventh Sabbath succeeding the Passover (Lev. 23:15, 16), hence as Jesus rose on the day after the Sabbath, Pentecost was on the Christian Sunday." — *Bible for School and Home.* **Was fully come.** Pentecost came, began, at sunset of the previous evening and lasted until sunset of the following day. It was "fully come" or as the Am. R. margin reads "was being fulfilled," with the light of the next morning (v. 15).

Pentecost was peculiarly appropriate for the coming of the great event.

2. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

1. It was called the "day of first fruits" (Numb. 28 : 26) or "Feast of the Harvest" (Ex. 23 : 16), the wheat and barley harvest, as the Feast of Tabernacles in the autumn was the Thanksgiving feast for fruits such as the olive and the vine. "Pentecost was the symbol of the first fruits of the Messianic people, the earnest of that larger harvest, the ingathering of which it is Luke's business to relate." — *New Century Bible.* The first ingathering was three thousand souls.

2. It was one on which, more than on any other, the Israelite was to remember that he had been a bondman in the land of Egypt, and had been led forth to freedom (Deut. 16 : 12); and it was, therefore, a fit time for the gift of the Spirit, which was to guide the Church into the truth which should make men free indeed (John 8 : 32).

3. It was a time when great numbers of Jews from all over the world were gathered at Jerusalem. Thus the events that followed would be made known throughout the world.

4. It was on Sunday, the first Christian Sunday. The memorial of the Resurrection and the Life. **They were all with one accord** ("all together," Am. R.), the whole 120, **in one place**, the upper room — where the ten days' prayer meeting was held.

Adrian Van Der Werff.

The Day of Pentecost.

The Coming of the Holy Spirit. Sunday morning about nine o'clock. Crowds were passing along the street by the upper room when **suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind**. More clearly in the Am. R. "came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind." It does not say that there was any wind, but only *a sound as of a wind.* No "whirlwind shook the building." "The audible sign filling the room announced the power represented by it as doing the same." — *Professor Hovey.* **It** (the sound) **filled all the house**, and was heard beyond its walls by the multitudes (v. 6).

3. **And there appeared unto them.** The manifestation to the ear was followed by its manifestation to the eye. **Cloven tongues**, Am. R. "tongues parting asunder"; not each tongue cleft into two parts, forked, but "the fire was in the form of *tongues* which *distributed themselves* over the company, a tongue *settling upon* the head of *each one.*" — *Rackham.* **Like as of fire.** It was not real fire, as an organ of destruction, but with the appearance and brightness of fire, like that of the burning bush which Moses saw. The form of the flame was that of a tongue, the symbol of speech. **It sat upon each of them**, the apostles, the women, the laymen. "Sat" denotes that the appearance was not a momentary flash, but that the influence which it symbolized was to be permanent.

The twofold aspect of the church is here represented. (1) Its unity was shown by the original mass of flame, all of one nature; and then (2) the individual aspect, for the flame separated and each person had his own distinct share.

4. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

"Swiftly and straight each tongue of flame,
Through cloud and breeze, unwavering came,
And darted to its place of rest
On some meek brow of Jesus blest.
Nor fades it yet that living gleam;
And still those lambent lightnings stream;
Where'er the Lord is, there are they;
In every heart that gives him room
They light his altar every day,
Zeal to inflame and vice consume."
— *John Keble.*

III. **INFALLIBLE PROOFS OF THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**, v. 4. **And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.** "*Filled* can mean nothing less than that the whole capacity of each man was occupied, and all his being under the influence. The degree of receptivity varied, no doubt, but the lesser and the greater vessels were all full. The whole nature was influenced; for that divine Spirit can enter into every part of a soul, and will prove himself the spirit of truth to the understanding, the spirit of power and of love, and of self-control to the will, and the affections, and the governing reason, the spirit of sound understanding to the practical man; and the whole nature, filled with him, will flame with new brilliance, like a bit of black carbon in a stream of electricity. The Spirit of God has all humanity for its sphere of action." *Maclaren.*

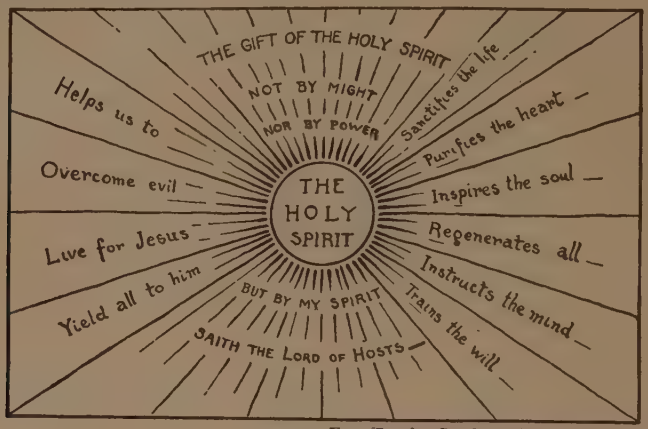
The Holy Spirit was not now given for the first time. "That which was peculiar in this event is, that (1) now, for the first time, *all* were filled with the Holy Ghost, not merely the apostles; and (2) the influence was not occasional and transient, but abiding." — *Abbott.* (3) But the chief difference is the *abundance* and *power* with which the Holy Spirit is now given, thus characterizing the gospel times as the dispensation of the Spirit.

1. The first proof was the remarkable manifestations of a power far beyond what any man could do. The signs that accompanied this power were to reveal the fact, "in letters that could be read from the stars," that the invisible Holy Spirit was actually present, to make the fact clear and unmistakable, to show the source whence the power and its effects came, and to illustrate its nature. We know that an unseen power exists by what it does. The sound, the flame, the speaking with tongues, were proofs of the unseen power of the Spirit. The Apostles could not know and realize the presence of the Holy Spirit without some manifestations that made it known to the senses. No one ever saw the greatest forces in the world. No one ever saw electricity, or gravitation, or chemical forces. We know them only by what they do. We know the Holy Spirit by what He did and is still doing, especially in his transformation of people. From this time on there was a marvellous change in the apostles. It was almost a transfiguration experience. So the dead wire is thrilled with electricity, and bursts out into light and power. They were common men no longer. As Mosheim says, "Their ignorance was turned into light, their doubts into certainty, their fears into a firm and invincible fortitude, and their former backwardness into an ardent and inextinguishable zeal." Note especially the change in Peter from the man who, two months before, had forsaken his Lord and fled, and thrice denied him.

Illustration. The Disguised Angel Revealed. "Parnell, in his beautiful poem of 'The Hermit,' one of the classics of the English language, has drawn the picture of an angel who had been disguised in mortal form suddenly quitting an earthly companion, and, assuming his heavenly garb, his raiment becoming flowing, his wings iridescent, and his countenance radiant with celestial light." The proof grows more complete when we see the 3000 converted, and it has been growing stronger and stronger all down the ages. "The simple truth is that Christianity itself, with this Somebody left out, is more of an incredible miracle than the most wonderful acts that have ever been ascribed to the spirit of Jesus. There is no other explanation possible for the rise and power of the religion of Christ except the irresistible power of an omniscient, omnipresent, supernatural Spirit." — *William T. Ellis.*

Illustration. The Pull of the Unseen. "A boy sat on a doorstep, in the gathering dusk of the evening, holding a string in his hand. A passer-by, noticing the boy's eager zest and interest, asked him what he was doing that made him so happy. 'I am flying my kite,' was his answer. 'Why, I see no kite,' said the gentleman, sweeping the darkening skies with his eyes. 'Neither do I,' said the boy, 'but I feel it pull.' We cannot see Heaven, as we move on in this world, but if it is a reality to our faith, we can feel it pull upon our hearts as we toil and struggle under our burdens." — *J. R. Miller.*

"*What Society wants* is a new motive, not a new cant." "To fail to give to our young men a sense and appreciation of the dynamic force of religious faith in the progress of human affairs is to leave them ignorant of the greatest and most profound fact of history." — *Macaulay.*



From London Sunday School Chronicle.
Blackboard Plan.

The central disc may be of white paper or card cut out and fixed on the board before the lesson. The radiating lines should also be drawn beforehand, and may be of white chalk shading off into yellow at the ends. The effect will be of rays of light from a central sun or luminous source, suggesting the power of the Holy Spirit to give spiritual light and life to all. The work and influence of the Spirit are set forth in the acrostic sentences from the words "Holy Spirit" forming the initial letters. — E. J. W.

IV. **THE SYMBOLS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THEIR INNER MEANING.** *The Symbol of the Wind.* "The Greek word was used in both senses, *wind* and *spirit*, by our Lord in his conversation with Nicodemus (John 3: 8)." — *Cook.* 1. It is an invisible power of which no one knows "whence it cometh or whither it goeth."

2. It is the breath of life. No one can live without it. In Ezekiel's vision in the valley of dry bones, we have a similar association of the wind or breath with spiritual influence: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live!"

3. It is all-pervasive; it penetrates everywhere.

4. It is very powerful in its action.

5. Yet it is very gentle and delicate, breathing around the rose, and gently touching the little child.

"We are but organs mute, till a master touches the keys —
Verily, vessels of earth into which God poureth the wine;
Harps are we, silent harps that have hung on the willow trees,
Dumb till our heartstrings swell and break with a pulse divine."

The Symbol of the Flame. John the Baptist had said that "Jesus shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." Fire is one of the most expressive symbols of the Holy Spirit. Fire, shining in light, is mysterious in nature, ineffably bright and glorious, everywhere present, swift-winged, undefiled, and undefilable.

1. It represents the revealing power of the Holy Spirit, shining into each soul, and illuminating it as a house when the lamps are lighted within; as a twilight scene when the sun rises upon it.

2. It expresses the purifying, cleansing power of the Spirit. Fire and light are the great disease killers. So is the Spirit to moral diseases. He always purifies the soul where he dwells. He is the refining fire that cleanses the dross from the pure gold.

3. It symbolized the comfort, warmth, cheer, fresh life, joy, peace, which the Holy Spirit imparts.

4. Light convinces the world of dust, of dirt, of a thousand evil things unknown in the darkness. For example, a ray of light in a dusty room, and Tyndall's ray through the glass tube showing seed germs that no other process could make known. So the Spirit convinces of sin, of the evils in the heart. He does more than this: he causes men to feel as well as to see.

5. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7. And they were all amazed, and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?

8. And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9. Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

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5. Fire is the symbol of intense energy and zeal. The Holy Spirit fills the soul with glowing enthusiasms and unconquerable energy and zeal.

6. Fire, as light, enables us to see, gives new visions, makes our path plain.

The Symbol of the Tongue. 1. This symbol represented the means by which the disciples were to spread the Gospel. But it needs to be a tongue of fire, of the light of truth, of the warmth of comfort.

2. It is the symbol of the Gospel for all nations and all languages.

3. It is the means of expressing whatever is within us, revealing our deeper feelings.

4. Those who are filled with the Spirit speak to all hearts, all needs, all characters. Not each disciple to all, but some disciple for each need. They speak with new tongues, new meaning, new power. The tongue is the outlet of the soul. A new spirit always means a new tongue.

V. **THE TWO POWERS, THE RISEN CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, MAKING THE GOSPEL KNOWN OVER THE WORLD,** vs. 5–12. **There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews,** both those who had come up to the spring feasts **out of every nation under heaven,** and foreign Jews who had come there to spend their declining years. **Devout men.** Truly religious men, waiting for the appearing of the promised Messiah. These were the persons most likely to become Christians. Great numbers of Jews were business men settled in all the nations of the Roman world-empire, taking with them their Bibles (the Old Testament) and building synagogues for their worship.

6. **Now when this was noised abroad.** Am. R. "When this sound was heard." It must mean either the sound as of a rushing mighty wind "which sounded forth from the house of meeting to the street" (*Meyer*), or the sound of the disciples talking in the various languages (*Neander*). The sound naturally attracted crowds, and the disciples naturally went out into the streets to tell them of **the wonderful works of God** (v. 11), as the resurrection of Jesus, his ascension, and the "Promise of the Father." **Were confounded.** "Either the individuals were perplexed, or, more probably, the whole assembly were thrown into confusion and excitement, discussing the meaning of the singular phenomenon." — *Abbott.* **Every man heard them** ("was hearing," imperfect) **speak** ("speaking" Am. R.) **in his own language.**

7. Of course **they were all amazed,** when they recognized that **all these which speak were Galileans.** All the eleven apostles, and doubtless the large majority of the rest of the 120 were Galileans. They would be easily recognized by their dress and their speech. They were common people from the country who would not have so much opportunity to hear foreign languages as those who dwelt in the city, but most of them could speak not only Aramæan, the language of their common speech, but more or less of Greek, and certainly Hebrew, which every Jew was taught.

The scene will become more vivid to us when we realize the confusion and perplexity now existing in Oriental lands, on account of the many languages spoken there.

9. **Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites,** in the Persian Empire beyond the Tigris, and including Turkistan and Afghanistan to the border of India. Here some of the ten tribes were settled by Shalmanezer. They all spoke Persian, but in different provincial forms and dialects. **Mesopotamia,** *i.e.* "between the rivers" Tigris and Euphrates. It includes Assyria and Babylonia, now belonging to the Turkish Empire. The language was some form of Chaldee. **Judæa.** Speaking Aramaic in a different dialect from Galilee. **Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia.** Not our Asia, but a small Roman province in what is now Asia Minor.

10. Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

11. Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

12. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

13. Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

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10. **Phrygia, and Pamphylia.** Here Greek, a different dialect in each, was spoken by the educated, but the common people had their own dialects. The above five were all in Asia Minor. **Egypt**, where the language was Coptic. **Libya**, in northern Africa, the portion referred to being **Cyrene**, on the Mediterranean. Their language is not certainly known, but they must have spoken also Greek. **Strangers** ("sojourners," Am. R.) *from* **Rome**, with the Latin language. **Jews and proselytes**, *i.e.* heathen who had accepted the Jewish religion. These terms probably include all the preceding nations.

11. **Cretes**, from the island of Crete in the Mediterranean, now called Candia. They may have spoken Greek. **Arabians**, from the great peninsula which stretches between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. They spoke Arabic. **The wonderful** ("mighty," Am. R.) **works of God.** The disciples told the people of all these countries, in their own languages, about God's wondrous love in sending his son Jesus, the Messiah, to save men from sin, and bring in the glorious days foretold by the prophets.

The Effect. (1) Outside of the band of the apostles, the people generally were amazed and perplexed. They could not see the meaning of the phenomenon. (2) Those of a certain disposition naturally mocked, and thought the disciples were intoxicated. It is always so, even to-day.

The Miracle of the Gift of Tongues. "We may readily admit that the miracle on the birthday of the Christian Church was meant to foreshadow the universal progress of the new faith, and its message for all mankind without distinction of nation, position, or age. But there is no reason to suppose that this power of speaking in foreign languages was a permanent gift. In the first place the Greek language was known throughout the Roman Empire, and in the next place Acts 14 seems to forbid any such view." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* Paul, who spoke with tongues more than they all (1 Cor. 14 : 18) could not understand the dialect of Lycaonia.

The Modern Gift of Tongues is the printing press, by which Bibles are now printed, in whole or in part, in more than 500 different languages and dialects.

Jesus Christ is the IDEAL; *the Coming of His Kingdom the* GOAL; *and the Holy Spirit the Transforming* POWER *of the Christian World. The Ideal* is, First, "something within us that impels us with a desire to *do*. It is an undefined and unrelenting desire, or energy, that beats in our blood. It says, 'Do something, create something, attain.' But it does not say what we are to do, or to create, or to attain. This force is in all of us, and it has always been in the pulse of men. This blind desire, this force, inspired William Blake to draw a picture of a ladder reaching up to the stars, underneath which he wrote, '*I Want, I Want, I Want.*'"

> "I asked the roses as they grew
> Richer and lovelier in their hue,
> What made their tints so rich and bright?
> They answered, 'Looking toward the light.'"

"The second element in the formation of an ideal is intelligence. It is knowledge of what is at the top of the ladder among the stars. It is knowledge of what we should do, what we should create, what we should attain. A third element is difficult to define. Suppose we call it *uplift*, or 'the light that never was on sea or land' — the inner light that burns in our hearts and that guides us on. Or suppose we call it *faith* — I like that name better." — *President Bowman, of Iowa State University.* This is our privilege and duty as we stand in the presence of the wonderful beginning of the work of the Christian Church.

LESSON III. — January 16.

PETER'S SERMON AT PENTECOST. — Acts 2 : 14–47.

PRINT vs. 22–24, 29–41. COMMIT vs. 38, 39.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.* — ACTS 2 : 21.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Professor Walter L. Hervey in his little book on *Picture Work*, tells us of a teacher who had used one of Washington Irving's stories as a means of teaching English, as in my early days we were taught the classics. He met with a change. "To the next class he said, 'Read the story.'

"'Only read it!' said they. 'Aren't we to do anything with it?'

"'No,' said the teacher, 'you are to read it *for fun*.'

"Should one be in danger of being misunderstood in saying that we do not have enough of reading the Bible for fun, for the pure enjoyment of its stories and of its matchless pictures?"

If a teacher could get his scholars to read this picturesque lesson, or the first two chapters together, just as they would a story for enjoyment, he would find it a great help in teaching.

Professor Hervey goes on to say: "But important as reading is, telling is incomparably better. The eye of the teacher is then fixed on the class, the tone is conversational, the hand is free to gesture and to draw. One can bring out dramatic power."

If the scholars would at home read this story, and then tell it in the class with their comments, it would make a foundation for a most interesting and profitable lesson.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 38, 39, 46, 47.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Sunday, May 28, A.D. 30. Later in the same day as our last lesson.

Place. — Jerusalem, probably in some open place not far from the Upper Room.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Peter's address and its characteristics.
His answer to those who had mocked.
How did his quotation from Joel apply to the present occasion?
Peter's method of preaching Christ.
The conditions of salvation, — Repentance, Forgiveness, Faith, Baptism.
What gave such great effectiveness to Peter's address?
A picture of the first Christian Church.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Story of the First Christian Church.

I. PETER DEFENDING THE DISCIPLES AGAINST FALSE CHARGES, vs. 14, 15.
II. THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS THE FULFILMENT OF GOD'S PROMISE THROUGH THE PROPHET JOEL, vs. 16–21.
III. PETER PROVES THAT JESUS WAS THE MESSIAH FOR WHOM THEY WERE LOOKING, vs. 22–36.
IV. CONVICTION OF SIN; AND THE WAY OF SALVATION, vs. 37–41.
V. PICTURES OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, vs. 42–47.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The *Commentaries* and books on *The Acts* are excellent. Dr. Thomas' *The Apostle Peter.* Professor Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church* (S. S. Times Co.). Ferneaux, *The Acts of the Apostles. The Holy Spirit Then and Now*, by Prof. E. H. Johnson, LL.D. *The Spirit-Filled Life*, by MacNeil. *Have Ye Received the Holy Spirit*, by Chapman. *The Baptism with the Holy Spirit*, by Torrey. Professor Graham Taylor's *Religion in Social Action.* Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and the Social Crisis.*

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Stories of the great Revivals, past and present; as under Savonarola, Luther, the Huguenots; and in Wales, India, China in recent times. Edwards on Revivals. Accounts of Revivals under "Billy Sunday." Moore's *Poems*, "Paradise and the Peri." Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* on the Church Beautiful. Dr. A. J. Gordon's *How Christ Came to Church.*

THE LESSON IN ART.

St. Peter, portrait from *Da Vinci's Last Supper;* by Bartolommeo,* Ribera, Sarto, Thorvaldsen. *St. Peter Preaching*, Fra Angelico (Florence). *The Apostles Preaching*, Doré. *St. Peter's Martyrdom*, Guercino, Lippi, Rubens, Titian.

I. **PETER DEFENDS THE DISCIPLES AGAINST FALSE CHARGES**, vs. 14, 15. The strange events of the last Lesson caused no little excitement among the crowds from all over the world that gathered around the disciples, — walking, — talking, — listening, — questioning. Of course all who did not understand other languages than those common to Palestine, would regard those that spoke them as uttering an incoherent jumble of words, the jargon of those who had been drinking too much wine; and when they heard the disciples telling in their own language the story of the sound as of a mighty wind, and of the tongues of flame sitting on each one, they could easily imagine that it was but the visions and spectres of delirium tremens from their **being filled with new wine**, — not unfermented wine, for it was too early in the season for that, but (according to *Exp. New Test.*) "wine still fermenting, intoxicating."

Peter, hearing this false charge, "with his accustomed promptness and his impulse for leadership," stood up **with the eleven** around him.

Peter Preaching.

Chrysostom calls attention to the fact that "in the place where a few weeks before he had denied with an oath that he knew 'the man,' he now stands forth to proclaim him as the Christ and the Saviour, . . . in the midst of the people breathing murder, he discourses with such confidence, that this very thing becomes an unquestionable proof of the resurrection." He **lifted up his voice**, so that the whole multitude of more than three thousand might hear.

Ye men of Judea. "With a touch of respect in the tone which may be expressed by 'Fellow Jews'" (*New Century Bible*) he asked them to **hearken to my words.**

Rev. Charles Stelzle, Superintendent of the Presbyterian Department of Church and Labor, speaking through the *Sunday School Times*, urges us to speak to the foreigners who come to our shores speaking sixty-six languages, in Peter's persuasive and gentlemanly way. "What a cosmopolitan crowd that must have been to which Peter's tremendously significant sermon was preached — typical of what the future Church was to be — 'men out of every nation under heaven'!

"What message shall be spoken to this Babel?

"It must have in it the salutation, 'Men and BRETHREN,' even as it was found in that message which Peter delivered on the day of Pentecost. Not 'Dago,' nor 'Sheeny,' nor 'Hunky,' but *brother*.

"It must be the language of love, — the language which all can speak, through eye and hand-grasp and voice, if not in tongue."

"In the way of an orator Peter is first careful to remove the prejudice against them." **For these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.** These words refer to the hour of early prayer, 9 A.M. "The Jews previously did not partake of food [during the Feast of Pentecost]. . . . Peter appeals to the early period of the day as a proof that the charge of drunkenness was contrary to all reasonable probability." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

II. **THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS THE FULFILMENT OF GOD'S PROMISE TO THE JEWS THROUGH THEIR PROPHET JOEL OF THE TIMES OF THE MESSIAH**, vs. 16–21. But, instead of drunkenness, Peter continues, these marvels you have seen and heard, and especially the change in the disciples, are the very things foretold by the prophet Joel that should come to pass in the last days — the Messianic times you have been longing for. The times of the Messiah have begun,

I will pour out, expressing great abundance in contrast with the gentle dews of the Spirit in the previous age.

Upon all flesh, that all mankind, with the suggested contrast between man as "flesh" with all its weakness, imperfections, and earthly tendencies, and the divine, glorious, all-powerful Spirit of God. **Your sons and your daughters**, men and women old and young, **shall prophesy**, not necessarily foretell the future, but speak what God reveals to them, see into the heart of things as God opens their eyes, and speak them forth. They shall **see visions** and **dream dreams** of better things. They shall see more and more clearly the Ideal, and strive to make it the Real. That is one great characteristic of Christians. Their faith

"sees the Best that glimmers through the Worst,
She feels the sun is hid but for a night,
She spies the summer through the winter bud,
She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls.
She hears the lark within the songless egg,
She finds the fountain where they wailed 'mirage.'"
— Tennyson's *The Ancient Sage.*

"To blind old Milton's rayless orbs
A light divine is given,
And deaf Beethoven hears the hymns
And harmonies of heaven."
— *Mackay.*

God gives us these visions and dreams to lead us on to the best things of life. The whole church should keep before her the vision of a perfect manhood and womanhood, perfect business ideals, a perfect church, a perfect world, the city of God. Recall Dr. A. J. Gordon's dream, that changed his life and ministry, in *How Christ came to Church.* Select Notes, 1905, p. 182. Mrs. Preston's *Poems*, "The Ideal and the Real."

"*The glory of our religion* is that it takes us along the upward way, and gives us ever wider horizons and continual surprises of joy. One finds in no other realm so many transfigured faces. Christianity opens a window in the meanest hut and shows the dweller the Alpine ranges of God's love and purpose. And if there be one life in a slum that lifts itself like a lily out of the mire, it will invariably be found to be due to the attraction of the Sun of righteousness." — *London Sunday School Chronicle.*

The Signs of His Coming are pictured immediately after the entrance of the new life, the filling God's people with His Holy Spirit. Naturally one would not expect as signs of progress such things as are here given, — blood, fire, vapor and smoke, the sun itself turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, **before the Day of the Lord come, that great and notable day**, when the Christian Dispensation shall have completed its work and the perfected Kingdom of God shall come on the earth. But such have been the signs from that day to this.

The expressions in Joel, and the similar ones in Matt. 23 and Luke 21, are figurative, metaphorical statements of facts, such as took place at the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple, as well as of the conflicts and persecutions during the interval between Pentecost and that great day of the Lord. It was a great day of the Lord, for it was the means of spreading the Gospel far and wide, and of breaking down the barriers that stood in the way of the progress of Christianity.

Parallel with these signs and wonders, were signs and wonders of another kind, — signs of the moral transformation of the character of men; wonders of the spread of the gospel among the nations, marvels of heroic martyrdoms, miracles of healing, helping the poor, brotherly love.

The conflict between good and evil makes trouble till good gains the victory.

Peter appeals to his hearers to escape from these evils: **whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved** from the impending calamities. It is remarkable that no Christians perished in the siege of Jerusalem. Though more than a million of Jews perished, yet the followers of Christ who were there, having been warned by him, when they saw the signs of the Romans approaching, withdrew to Pella, and were preserved. But the salvation means much more than deliverance from impending calamities. The disciples shall come forth from the trials like gold purified in the fire. They shall be saved in character, and have "the fulness of blessing for body and soul which the verb expresses on the lips of Christ." Their cause shall be triumphant; the truth for which they lived shall shine forth as the sun.

Modern Applications. The beginning of the twentieth century is very like the times of the early church. Never has there been a greater conflict between good and evil than to-day. The people are everywhere rising up against wrongs and oppression. Tumults, commotions, upheavals, wars, follow. The conscience of good people is awakening, and the churches are fighting against wrong. No greater signs and wonders, ever were than now on mission fields, in education, in healings, in a thousand efforts to make the world better. These are signs that the Gospel is alive, that the

22. Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23. Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

24. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

29. Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

30. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31. He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35. Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

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church is up and doing, that moral winter is giving way before the coming of spring. The battle is the sign of victory. So Christ himself says, "I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). It is no time for discouragement. It is a time of visions when we shall **see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory**, and shall listen to Christ's triumphal exhortation, **When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.**

III. **PETER PROVES THAT JESUS WAS THE PROMISED MESSIAH FOR WHOM THEY WERE LOOKING**, vs. 22–36. *First Proof.* **Jesus of Nazareth**, the familiar designation, to distinguish him from others of the same name. **Approved of God among you, by miracles** (Am. R. "mighty works"), **and wonders and signs.** These were God's endorsement of Jesus, the proofs that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, for they were manifestations of divine power, of deeds which only God could do. And these healings of the sick, the casting out of demons, and power over nature, expressed the loving kindness of God toward men, and were entirely worthy of the Messiah. These **God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves also know.**

Second Proof. Jesus made atonement for sin by giving his life on the cross to save mankind. He did this freely, according to **the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God**, by which every part of God's plan of salvation, was foreknown, and planned, as shown in the Old Testament. Peter thus shows that the death of Christ was not a defeat, was not an overthrow of God's plans, as it would seem to the people, but an essential part of the divine plan for the Messiah and the scheme of redemption. **Ye**, Jews of Jerusalem, **have taken, and by wicked hands**, the crowds that cried "Crucify him," and the Roman authorities and soldiers, whom you used as your instruments, **have crucified and slain.** Am. R., "Ye, by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay." Your prophet foretold this hundreds of years before in Isaiah 53.

Third Proof. 24. **Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains** (Am. R. "pangs") **of death.** No one but God could do this. Jesus is alive, the living Messiah. A dead Jesus could not be their promised Messiah.

Fourth Proof, vs. 25–35. The promised Messiah was to be the son of King David. Jesus was the son of David, and David himself foretold that this son should be the Christ, *i.e.* the Messiah raised up **to sit on his throne.** David **seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ that his soul was not left in hell**, Hades, the place of the dead (as Am. R.).

36. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

37. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?

38. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

This prophecy has been fulfilled, **this Jesus hath God raised up whereof we all are witnesses.** And it was he, now exalted by the right hand of God, until all his foes shall be under his feet, **and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed** (" poured," Am. R.) **forth this, which ye now see and hear.**

The Conclusion to which the Address Leads. **36. Let all the house of Israel.** Who believe and cherish these divine promises, and are looking forward with hope to the Messianic times. **Know assuredly**, *with such certainty that there can be no falling, no defeat, no mistake*, **THAT GOD HATH MADE THAT SAME JESUS WHOM YE HAVE CRUCIFIED, BOTH LORD** [your King in David's line] **AND CHRIST** [the Messiah].

IV. **CONVICTION OF SIN; AND THE WAY OF SALVATION**, vs. 37–41. **When they heard this they were pricked in their heart.** The Greek word is intensive, " to prick with a sharp point." Hence, *they were pricked deeply, intensely, with the sharp point* of his discourse. **In their heart.** Consciences, moral nature, as with a scorpion's sting, " as with a two-edged sword." Here, therefore, of the sharp painful emotion, the *sting* produced by Peter's words. " For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit . . . and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart."

They saw that they had committed an awful crime against God and the nation and themselves. They were in danger of the judgment to come. They had rejected their best friend and Saviour. They had done despite to the Son of God. They felt as Dr. Bonar wrote: —

"I see the crowd in Pilate's hall,
I mark their wrathful mien,
Their shouts of 'Crucify' appal,
With blasphemy between.

"And of that shouting multitude
I feel that I am one;
And in that din of voices rude,
I recognize my own.

"I see the scourges tear his back,
I see the piercing crown,
And of that crowd who smite and mock
I feel that I am one.

"Around yon cross the throng I see,
Mocking the Sufferer's groan;
Yet still my voice it seems to be,
As if I mocked alone."

" The sense of sin is the plowshare that opens the soil of the heart for the reception of every true grace of character."

The next step naturally was to ask Peter and the apostles, **Men and brethren, what shall we do?** Peter's sermon was not like Cicero's oration of which men said, " How beautiful! " but like that of Demosthenes which made them say, " Let us march against Philip."

Peter's Answer was twofold, v. 38. *First*, **Repent.** Repentance means such a change of mind and purpose as leads to a change of conduct. Sorrow for sin is not repentance, but leads to repentance. One may be sorry on account of sin for various reasons, and not repent. But one cannot repent and not be sorry for the sin. Repentance implies a change of mind and heart, of controlling motive and purpose.

The little boy who said he was not sorry for what he had done, but he was sorry that he had been found out, did not repent.

" The past cannot be changed but the past can be left." — *Dr. W. L. Watkinson.*

Illustration from one of Rev. E. M. Noyes' sermons to children, *The Dark Closet:* " When a room is left shut up and dark, dust and dirt gather there. But if you open the shutters and let in the sunlight, every cobweb and dust heap shows, and you want to begin cleaning the room at once. If we open the windows of our hearts, God will shine in, and we shall hasten to clear out the things that make dirt and disorder within. If you are ready to love him, and obey him, there is no difficulty in finding God. Just open your heart as you throw open the windows of your room and he will come in as the sunshine does, and make your life sunny and glad."

39. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call.

40. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

Peter's Second Answer. **And be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ.** This was the rite by which they publicly confessed their acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah, their trust in him, and their consecration to his service. It was like taking an oath of allegiance when one becomes a citizen of a country. Public confession confirms the resolve, burns the ships behind us, helps to undo the evil example of the past, is an aid to others to change their lives, is one proof that the repentance is real. Dr. Geikie says, "Ablution in the East is, indeed, of itself, almost a religious duty. The dust and heat weigh upon the spirits and heart like a load; its removal is refreshment and happiness. It was, hence, impossible to see a convert go down into a stream, travel worn and soiled with dust, and in a moment emerge pure and fresh, without feeling that the symbol suited and interpreted a strong craving of the human heart." Paul in Col. 2:12 compares one who is baptized as having been buried with Christ in baptism, and raised with him to a new life.

Two Blessings Follow. First. **The remission of sins.** The sins are forgiven, the penalty removed, the love of sin taken away, the sinner is welcomed back into the family of God. Saved *from* sin, not *in* sin.

Second. They **received the gift of the Holy Spirit**, working such changes and transformations of character and life, as had been wrought in the apostles and the others of the hundred and twenty disciples, as described in the remaining verses of the chapter.

39. For the promise, of the Messiah, and of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and of salvation as foretold by Joel (vs. 16–21) and other prophets. It included all the hopes and blessings which the Messiah was to bring. **Is unto you**, in spite of your sins, and your crucifying the Messiah. He was the expression of God's love to you. He died that you might be saved. Therefore he wants to save you. But the promise reaches much farther than this, even to your children **and to all that are afar off.** "Ho, every one that thirsteth," "whosoever will." No one is left out, no one is too far away, if he will give heed to God's call and invitation.

40. Untoward, Am. R., "crooked," wandering from the straight and narrow way of righteousness.

The Result of Peter's Sermon. **41. They that gladly received his word.** All that really received it received it gladly; hence, leaving out "gladly" (as in Am. R.) does not change the meaning. **Were baptized** not necessarily on that day. But all confessed Christ publicly by baptism. **There were added**, to the one hundred and twenty disciples, **three thousand souls.** This was a glorious beginning for the new church. The numbers added greatly to the power of the movement. Each person was a centre of influence. Three thousand burning and shining lights were scattered over the city.

V. **PICTURES OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH**, vs. 42–47. This picture of the early church is so attractive, so beautiful, so ideal, that some commentators have felt that it was idealized by late writers and was not literally true. But as a matter of fact it has been repeated over and over again, for short spaces of time. Our own eyes have seen it, our hearts have felt it.

This picture, like the times of true and deep revival, like the picture of the New Jerusalem in Revelation, is a Perpetual Ideal before the church, and one that can be attained because it has been. "God never permitted us to form a theory too beautiful for his power to make practical."

Compare Bunyan's word picture of the Palace Beautiful, the most perfect picture of the church and its ordinances in all literature. The lions in the way before coming; the porter, Watchful, welcoming the pilgrim at the door; the examination by the gentle maidens, Piety, Prudence, and Charity, with their discourse at the supper; the sleeping in the Chamber of Peace; the study of the records of the place; the vision of the Delectable Mountains; and the putting-on the armor for future warfare — make altogether a fitting picture of the "house built by the Lord of the hill, for the relief and security of pilgrims."

Get your scholars to read it at home, and report it in the class.

First Picture, v. 42. Christians going to school under the Apostles who had been instructed by Jesus himself. *Doctrine*, here means teaching and the truths which were the results of teaching. There were public church services, conference meetings, Sunday schools, classes daily for instruction in the great truths, interpretations of their Bible, and most of all the story of Jesus, his mighty works, his revelations from God, his personal character. **They continued steadfastly**, with enthusiasm. It is steady, persistent work that tells. No one can be a good scholar who is fitful and irregular in his attendance at school.

Illustration. The Persian princes, according to Xenophon, had for their teachers the wisest man, the bravest man, the most temperate man, and the most just man in the kingdom. We have all four in the Apostles, representing Jesus the Christ.

Second Picture is of one great happy, united Family. One of the greatest means of growth in spiritual life is fellowship and familiar intercourse with the saints. No one can well be as good a Christian alone, as he can in fellowship with other Christians.

See Amos R. Wells' little book *The Arithmetic of Friendship*.

Christian unity is not the unity of Organization, nor of the thinking all alike, but the *Unity of Spirit*. It is the unity of an army under one leader, with one aim, with one patriotism, but with a great variety of organizations and modes of service. "The old motto, 'Divide and rule,' must give way to the more reasonable slogan, 'Combine and conquer.'"

Illustration. At the World's Sunday-school Convention at Jerusalem in April, 1904, there were fifteen hundred delegates from fifty-seven different religious bodies representing twenty-six countries, and all joined together in common worship and for a common purpose. It is said that the governor of Jerusalem asked if one thousand soldiers would be sufficient to keep peace among so many sects.

It was replied that they needed none.

Third Picture. The Christians eating together, in little groups from house to house, vs. 42, 46. "The Breaking of Bread together is the New Testament phrase for the Lord's supper. It was done in remembrance of Jesus, a new consecration to his service."

"The sacrament of Holy Communion has always been recognized as the central means and test of fellowship with the church." — *Rackham.* Eating bread together in the Orient is the seal of a Covenant.

See Trumbull's *Covenant of Salt*, and the story of Saladin and the Templar in Scott's *Talisman*.

In the *Fourth Picture* we see early Christians all present in Prayer meeting. No one can grow in grace without praying in secret, but there are helps and blessings which come from united prayer which the other cannot give.

Illustrations. So with several pieces of wood on the fire, each one burns brighter on account of the others, as a harmony in music produces effects which no solo, however good, can produce. Two are more than twice one. *One* alone is a color, *several* together make the pictured window of a cathedral. *One* is a sound, *several* are an anthem.

It is hard for those who neglect them to realize how much they miss by not praying together in the family and in the prayer meeting, where two or three are gathered together with Jesus.

In the *Fifth Picture* we see **many wonders and signs done by the Apostles.** The apostles did the same kind of deeds as their Master had done, and by these **wonders and signs** they proved that they were true disciples of Jesus the Messiah, and that God indorsed them as belonging to him and his Kingdom. Every sign and wonder was done for the good of man. The Greek word for "wonder" is never used alone in the New Testament, but is always used in connection with some word like "miracles" or "signs," to show that Jesus and his apostles never did anything merely to astonish or make a show, but always because it was something that ought to be done for some good purpose.

The greatest of all miracles was the conversion of three thousand in a day, and the change made in these men.

Illustration. The "Seven wonders" of the ancient world were,

1. The Pyramids of Egypt.
2. The Mausoleum built by the King of Caria in Asia Minor for his queen.
3. The Temple of Diana at Ephesus.
4. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon.
5. The Colossus of Rhodes.

6. The ivory and gold Statue of Jupiter at Olympia, where the Olympic Games were held.

7. The marble Lighthouse at Alexandria, Egypt.

But these are very small compared with the wonders and signs the religion of Jesus has wrought for the good of the world. The wonderful work of Missions. The influence of Christ's religion in healing more sick, helping more poor, saving more life, than he himself had time to do on earth; according to his own promise in John 14: 12. The transformations of individual character. The millions upon millions of dollars given every year to help the poor and needy. The innumerable societies and institutions at work especially in our great cities to uplift mankind into a higher, richer, and happier life.

Sixth Picture. The Church at work, vs. 44, 45. **All that believed . . . had all things common.** They were members of one family and held things in common just as members of a family do. Everything was for the good of all. No one, "said that anything was his own." Some sold of their possessions, and distributed the money **as every man had need**, whether citizens or strangers. Some were poor, some may have suffered loss by being driven from their homes on account of their religion. Some were strangers without employment. Great numbers had come from distant countries, and were remaining to know more about the new religion. There was no compulsion to sell their property, but the impulse of their own loving generous hearts. **Parted them to all.** Not to friends only, but **as every man had need.** "These verbs (*sold, parted*) are in the imperfect tense, indicating that the sale and distribution took place from time to time, as special occasions of distress or want called for them." — *Ellicott.* The spiritual and temporal aid went on together hand in hand as they always should go. Thus the apostles proved themselves the true successors of their Master, by doing the same kind of deeds in his name, illustrating the Gospels, and by realizing the promise Jesus gave them that they should be able to do great miracles.

Seventh Picture, vs. 46, 47. A church full of praise and joy, the natural fruit of such characters and lives as have been described. **Did eat their meat,** "*i.e.* took their food, their ordinary meals." — *Cambridge Bible.* **With gladness,** Greek, *exulting, abounding joy.* The gospel pervades the whole life with gladness. Gloom is not the fruit of religion, but of sin and disease; every heavenly emotion and act is joyous in its nature. They were glad of the goodness of God which provided the food. Every good gift was a mark of God's love to them. They were glad because they had enough to give to others. They enjoyed the food more by enjoying it together with hearts of love, with "the feast of reason and the flow of soul" concerning the spiritual blessings of God. **With singleness of heart,** without deceit, with the one single motive of serving God and helping, with no taint of selfishness or reward. Every act and work here recorded was joyful in its very nature. It was the very joy of heaven.

Oriental Scene.
Sitting at a meal.

Illustration. Grumble Corner and Thanksgiving Street. At a camp-meeting in South Framingham, a man arose and said that he formerly lived in Grumble Corner, but had lately moved up to Thanksgiving Street, where the air was fresher, the sunshine brighter, the neighbors pleasanter.

47. **Having favour with all the people.** "Be such a man, live such a life, that if every man were such as you, and every life a life like yours, this earth would be a paradise." — *Phillips Brooks.*

Eighth Picture. A Successful Church. Such a church as has been described must be successful in numbers. They took the only course that would lead to the highest

success. **The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved**, Am. R., "Added to them day by day those that were saved." Margin, "were being saved."

Illustration. *The Church* is thus (1) *A family*, with all its joys and influences and safeguards. (2) *A school*, where the disciples (= scholars, learners) are learning the lessons of life from the Divine Teacher. (3) *A hospital*, where those sick of sin are being made hearty and strong by the best possible treatment. (4) *An army*, trained to fight the battles of the Lord against all sin, all evil everywhere. (5) *A band of workers*, carrying on the Lord's work, and fulfilling his mission over all the world.

LESSON IV. — January 23.

THE SPIRIT OF LIFE. — Rom. 8:12–30.

PRINT vs. 12–17, 26–30. COMMIT vs. 16, 17.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.* — ROM. 8:14.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The last address Rev. C. Silvester Horne, a Congregational minister of England and a member of Parliament, made before his sudden death on his way to Toronto, was given to 600 boys and girls in a grammar school in Brookline, Mass., early in May, 1914. His subject was a Rule which he said was given him in early life, which he declared was the one rule of living. It was

LEARN TO RIDE THE HORSE THAT THREW YOU.

"He applied it to their sports, their studies and to their personal character; and then spoke of a great leader of old whose followers were once dispirited in their fishing expedition, and who might perhaps have been excused from going on with it; yet he told them to keep on doing what they had been doing and then success came. For days thereafter some of the children were saying as they met one another, 'Learn to ride the horse that threw you.'"

This is a good rule to apply to this Sunday School Lesson. It seems rather difficult for young people, but if you keep on trying to see, you will conquer the difficulty that first conquered you, and it will become your helper, and carry you to treasures you had not dreamed of before.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The Epistle to the Romans was written by Paul in the winter of 57–58, or in the spring of 58, about three years before he had visited Rome.

Place. — The Epistle was written at Corinth, to the Christians at Rome.

Ruler. — "Paul first came in contact with the Roman Church in the early years of Nero."

Foreign Colonies. — "If there had not been large foreign colonies at Rome, as throughout the Empire, it would have been difficult for Christianity to have gained a foothold."

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 14, 17, 26, 28, 37–39.

Thorwaldsen.
Saint Paul.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why a lesson in Romans is given in this place.
The Epistle to the Romans, — when, and where, written; its purpose.
The conflict between the flesh and the spirit.
What is it to be children of God?
What is their inheritance?
The redemption of creation.
The glorious liberty of the children of God.
The redemption of the body.
All things working together for good: to whom?
The plan of God and free will.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How to become children and heirs of God.

I. THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT, vs. 12–16.
II. CHILDREN AND HEIRS OF GOD, vs. 17, 18.
III. THE REDEMPTION OF CREATION, vs. 19–22.
IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPING OUR INFIRMITIES, vs. 26, 27.
V. GOD'S PLAN AND PURPOSE FOR US AND FOR CREATION, vs. 28–30. AN APPEAL TO THE YOUNG.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Lyman Abbott's *Commentary on Romans*, shows deep insight and is one of the best. *Expositor's Greek New Testament*, vol. 2. *International Critical Com. The American Commentary on Romans.* (Baptist Pub. Soc.) Professor Beet on *Romans.* Professor Stifler of Crozer Theo. Sem. on *Romans.* The *Westminster New Testament. The New Century Bible. The Bible for Home and School. Expositor's Bible. Cambridge Bible.*

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Dr. Bushnell's Sermon on "Every Man's Life a Plan of God." *The Loom of Life*, by F. N. Peloubet. (35 cts., United Soc. of Christian Endeavor, Boston.)

"The eighth chapter of Romans is like the Garden of Eden, full of all manner of delights. Here you have luxurious Truths with which to satisfy your soul. All its paths drop fatness. It is an altogether inexhaustible mine of spiritual wealth, and I invite the saints to dig in it, and to dig in it again and again." — *Spurgeon.*

THE CENTRAL THEME OF THIS LESSON.

It is: The children of God and their inheritance, v. 17. All the rest of the lesson unfolds the meanings and applications of that verse as the branches on a tree. We see how the victory of the spiritual life over the fleshly life is the condition of being adopted into the family of God; what is our inheritance if we thus become God's children and heirs; how creation itself and our physical bodies partake of this inheritance; that God has a plan in all this which uses but does not control or interfere with our free wills; and that all is under God's infinite love so that no power in the universe can prevent the accomplishment of his plan and purpose.

I. **THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT**, vs. 12–16. The "Flesh" and the "Spirit" are the two contending forces in the battle of life. The whole value of life depends on which of these two gain the victory.

The Flesh is not used here as the mere substance of the human body. Christ had a human body which was not sinful, although temptable; and our bodies can be redeemed to be the instruments of righteousness (v. 23). Hence "Flesh" here means the fallen or sinful human nature with its temptations and lusts. It is more than the material body, for among the works of the flesh (Gal. 5 : 19–21) are: "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." The flesh is that state of mind which gives itself up to yielding to the temptations of the body, which makes temporal things first in importance, and uses its energies to gain the luxuries and pleasures which pamper our temporal bodily life, in contrast with those that elevate our higher spiritual nature. It includes everything that is wrong, all gain at the expense of righteousness and love, all pleasures that injure others. It is a wrong, hellish state of mind.

The Spirit is the spirit of God in man. It is our higher nature, which is like God's nature. We learn what the Spirit is by its fruits. "For the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Gal. 5 : 22, 23.) "In this chapter Paul emphasizes this truth as the first word of encouragement in life's battle." — *Abbott.*

The Battle of Life is between these two forces. "For the flesh lusteth against the

12. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5:17.) Stevenson's well-known story of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, in which the two opposite characters dwell in the same man, presents a picture more or less true of us all, and of most institutions, — the question of life or death is which shall overcome and expel the other. Lynde Palmer's delightful story of *John Jack*, where the good in the boy, "John," throws off the yoke of a bad master, "Jack." The real life-question, the real test of men or measures is which is gaining the victory, — the wheat or the tares, the flesh or the spirit, the mammon or the angel within us. The good grows by overcoming the evil. The war against wrong makes mighty men. It increases courage, patience, loyalty, endurance, love of the good and hatred of the evil. We may fail of our ideal, we may be wounded in the battle, we may fall into error, we may make mistakes, but if our face is toward the foe, if we are wounded in front, and not in the back, we may rest assured of final victory.

Here is where the boys and girls in our Sunday school should practise Rev. Silvester Horne's last message to the boys and girls of the Brookline school, as told on the first page of this lesson. LEARN TO RIDE THE HORSE THAT THREW YOU.

There is no other way of becoming children and heirs of God except by winning this victory. Then **the Spirit himself beareth witness with our Spirit that we are children of God** (v. 16, Am. R.).

II. **CHILDREN AND HEIRS OF GOD**, vs. 17, 18. (1) All men are in a sense children of God, since their natural life comes from him, they are made in his image, with mind and soul like his, which fact makes it possible to become children in the higher meaning of the term. (2) But in the highest and truest sense, the one commonly used in the Bible, only those are real children who have received from God his true moral nature, the same character and love of good which makes the moral life of God. (See John 3:3, 5; 8:38–44; Rom. 8:5–14.) The difference between these two senses in which men are children of God is shown by the use of the term, **Spirit of adoption** (v. 15) into the family of God, by the new birth of the Spirit. God loves all men, with an infinite yearning love. He desires that all shall come into his Kingdom and family. But only as they choose him, and love and serve him, is it possible that they can inherit the blessings he desires all to inherit.

The Inheritance of the Children of God. v. 17. **And if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.**

1. This inheritance is not earned, but is the gift of God to his children.

2. It is an inheritance of God's nature, his character, his holiness.

3. It is the family feeling, the union of God's children with one another; and with God the Father a friendship and love that are among the highest joys and blessings that any soul can receive.

> "Speak to Him, then, for he heareth,
> And spirit with spirit may meet —
> Closer is He than breathing,
> And nearer than hands and feet."
> — *Tennyson.*

4. We inherit God's home in heaven, and all that belongs to it.

> "I cannot hide that some have striven
> Achieving calm, to whom was given
> The joy that mixes man with heaven:
> Who rowing hard against the stream
> Saw distant gates of Eden gleam
> And did not dream it was a dream."

5. We inherit eternal life.

6. We inherit God's loving care.

7. Thus the inheritance of the children of God is the richest, the happiest, the most

26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of* God.

glorious, the most desirable of all conceivable possessions. But we must remember that in this inheritance we are **joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.** We must experience the same conditions as Christ did, the same self-denials, the same labors of love, the same battles with temptation, the same faithfulness even to the end, even if it costs our lives.

III. **THE REDEMPTION OF CREATION**, vs. 19–22. **For the earnest expectation of the creature** (better as in Am. R., "creation," as translated in the A. V. in v. 22). Creation, = all animate and inanimate nature, as distinguished from mankind. Creation is here personified as sighing and groaning after better things in sympathy with mankind. Originally a desert or wilderness, a little garden of Eden was prepared from it for the home of man into whom God breathed the breath of life. Man yielded to sin and was sent into uncultivated nature. Immediately man began to transform creation, to make it a better home for him. And just as fast as man became more developed and cultured, the world wherein he lived became more cultivated. Under Christian nations all creation has been gradually growing toward the paradise described in Revelation as the abode of sanctified man. The onward march of Christianity has been accompanied by rapid development of material creation, in multiplied powers and uses. The animals too are being civilized." The dog is a converted wolf; the cat is a civilized tiger or lion (see Isaiah 11).

The Redemption of the Body, v. 23. **We ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for . . . the redemption of our body.** The body too becomes better fitted to be an instrument of the spirit, as the spirit becomes more perfectly the child of God. As people live in accordance with the laws of God it becomes healthier, stronger, longer-lived. Hospitals, medical knowledge, rules of living, temperate habits, are redeeming the body. See what has been done in Cuba and Panama Canal Zone in sweeping away yellow fever and malaria by cleanliness which is next to godliness, and especially by destroying the mosquitoes. The first effort to dig the canal by De Lesseps was made a failure by mosquitoes. Now the Canal Zone is one of the healthier regions of our country. Drunkenness, vice, luxurious living, are deadly enemies of the body. "In Christ, the body is seen to be something far different from the mere clog, or prison, or chrysalis, of the soul. It is its destined implement, may we not say its mighty wings in prospect, for the life of glory." — *Moule.* The complete redemption of the body will be when "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality . . . and death is swallowed up in victory;" and our new spiritual bodies will be glorified like Jesus' glorified body; gifted with wonderful new powers, beyond our imagination to conceive.

IV. **THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO DESCENDED UPON THE DISCIPLES AT PENTECOST, HELPING OUR INFIRMITIES**, vs. 26, 27. In all our battles against sin and temptation, in all our longings and strivings to be true children of God, we need a helper beyond our own strength. We have seen in our previous lesson what a change the Holy Spirit made in Peter and the other disciples; and what a change in his hearers. We are full of infirmities. We are ignorant even of **what we should pray for** (Am. R., "how to pray") in many of our doubts and questionings in regard to our duty, and in each crisis of need.

26. **The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us**, "as the father interprets the wants of the child, which the child does not himself understand." — *Abbott.* **With groanings which cannot be uttered**, expressing His intense desire to help us. And all this intercession for us is according to the will of God.

> "We ignorant of ourselves,
> Beg often our own harms, which the wise Powers
> Deny us for our good. So find we profit
> By losing of our prayers." — *Shakespeare, Antony and Cleopatra*, II: 1.

In that charming Allegory, *Expectation Corner* (Crowells, N. Y., 30 cts.), Adam Slowman's guide led him to the *Royal Exchange Office* where the petitions of poor short-sighted people for things that were not best for them, and which they thought

28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

29. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

30. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

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were not answered, were answered by exchanging the things that were not good for them, for the things that were most for their good; as a little child cries for the moon. He thinks he wants it, but it would crush him to death if he received it. He really wants a bright plaything, and his father giving it to him instead of the moon, really answers his prayer. For **we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.**

V. **GOD'S PLAN OF LIFE FOR US, AND FOR ALL CREATION**, vs. 28–30. **And we know** by what we have learned of God and his character, **that all things**, natural and spiritual, all the laws of nature, all the forces of the universe, whatever God does in the whole universe, **work together for good.** A good God could not do otherwise, **to them that love God**, and show it by obeying him. The God of love could not create a universe that did not accomplish this purpose.

A scientific friend of mine in answer to the question what he meant by the immanence of God in nature, replied that every movement of nature was a direct act of God's will, and it was unchangeable because it was so perfect that it could not be changed except for the worse. Hence it was the best possible for those who obeyed the laws, but those who disobeyed necessarily suffered the consequences of their disobedience.

This is equally true of God's moral laws. They are perfect for those who obey them and to those that love God they work together for good, and for good only, but to the disobedient they work punishment. This is absolutely necessary to one who is seeking the good of man. **To them that are called.** "Calling in Paul never means 'invitation'; it is always *effectual calling.*" — *Exp. Gk. Test.* "The term always implies that the divine summons is obeyed." — *New Century Bible.* **According to his purpose** to save them, his purpose to make mankind children and heirs of God, "after the pattern afforded by the life and character of Christ Jesus." "The one thing Paul is concerned with is the security given by the eternal love of God that the work of salvation will be carried through, in spite of all impediments, from foreknowledge to final glory." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

The stages of this progress are:

1. **Whom he did foreknow**, "that is, the called ones who love him," whom he foreknew would choose to love and obey him.

2. **He also did predestinate**, Am. R., "foreordained." "To predestinate is to determine from the start [that is from the accepting of God's invitation] what shall be the outcome. It is this active, living, ever-present and controlling predestination that shields the lover of God from harm, and turns 'all things' to his good," (*Stifler*), that he might **be conformed to the image of his Son.**

Illustration. "A sculptor would make a beautiful image in marble. He knows among many the huge rough stone which he will use for his purpose. He destines [predestinates] this block for the end which he has in view. That determination on his part preserves it. He will chisel and rasp and file on the block, but he will not do anything to hurt it, and he will see that no one else mars it. God's foreknowledge and predestination are the preservation of his people, making all things work for good." — *Prof. J. M. Stifler.*

3. **Them he also called.** Paul does not mean that God addresses this call only to those whom he has predestined to glory, but he affirms that none of those who are predestinated fail to be also called in their day and hour.

4. **Them he also justified**, forgave, blotted out their sins, put them right in his sight; and made them really just and righteous.

5. **Them he also glorified.** It is the completion of our salvation in a glorious character, in glorious company, in a glorious work, in a glorious heaven (vs. 31–39).

"And I knew at length that if only
We gave him his royal seat
The earthly music will take its place
And tremble around his feet
Sweeter than ever, because to our heart
The Master is still more sweet."

YOUNG MEN AND MAIDENS!

Do not Forget that God has a Plan and Purpose for Your Lives. You see by our lesson to-day that your Father in heaven wishes you all to be children and heirs of God. That is his plan for all of you personally, and that the world in which you live should be transformed into an instrument for redeeming all mankind.

Dr. Bushnell in his famous sermon on *Every Man's Life a Plan of God* has well said: Every human soul has a complete and perfect plan cherished for it in the heart of God, — a divine biography marked out. This life, rightly unfolded, will be a complete and beautiful whole, an experience led on by God, and unfolded by his secret nurture as trees and flowers by the secret nurture of the world; a drama cast in the mould of a perfect art; a divine study that shall forever unfold, in wondrous beauty, the love and faithfulness of God; great in its conception, great in the divine skill by which it is shaped; above all, great in the momentous and glorious issues it prepares."

There are always two elements in our lives. One is what God does for us, as much beyond our control as the march of the stars through the sky. But on the other hand there is a large portion of life that we do control. We have free wills, and make our own choices. We decide for ourselves whether we will follow God's plan or not. You can see in imagination two pictures before you. One is the picture of what God meant us to be, with all the possibilities of usefulness and blessing. There are all the good deeds, the loving words, the glorious traits of character, which God had planned for our lives, transcendently beautiful, a vision of shining glory. The other picture is our refusal to do right; our choice of evil, duties omitted, opportunities neglected, evil thoughts, passionate words, selfish deeds, disobedience to God our Father, — a life scorched with the fires of the pit, and defiled with the smoke of its burning. Either picture it is possible for us to realize. Which shall it be?

LESSON V. — January 30.

THE LAME MAN LEAPING. — Acts 3.

PRINT vs. 1-12. COMMIT vs. 9, 10.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.* — Acts 3:6.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Rev. Dan Crawford, who spent twenty-five years as a missionary in the wilds of Africa, and has now returned to spend the rest of his life there, spoke to the Boston Twentieth Century Club on the "Glory of doing without," showing how much one can do, and gain, by working amid disadvantages and limitations. He illustrated his theme by the story of a hunting expedition with an African chief. They came to a thicket where it was thought that a herd of deer were concealed. "Do you see any?" asked the chief. Dr. Crawford looked with his spy glass, and replied, "I think I can see two deer." The chief, looking with his naked eyes, said, "I can see twenty." The lack of glass had made him train his eyes.

So teachers and superintendents, who are limited in their opportunities, have poor accommodations, and miss many of the aids and conveniences, which larger and more favored schools possess, may yet do splendid work, gain skill and ingenuity, and discipline, and culture, by overcoming the difficulties in their way, as Peter who had to say, "Silver and gold have I none" and yet gave to the lame man more than the richest man in Jerusalem could give him.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 6, 9, 10; Matt. 11:5.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: One Specimen of the Work the Early Christians were doing.

Scene I.	Peter and John on Their Way to Prayer Meeting, v. 1.
Scene II.	They Meet a Lame Beggar Sitting by the Gate Beautiful of the Temple, vs, 2, 3.
Scene III.	Peter and John Give Him the Best Possible Assistance, vs. 4–8.
Scene IV.	Modern Light from an Ancient Story.
Scene V.	Peter Uses this Miracle to Preach Salvation by Jesus Christ, vs. 9–26.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

The Time is unknown, but it was probably not long after Pentecost in the Summer of A.D. 30. But since it was connected with persecutions, it may have been a year or two later.

Place. — Jerusalem, in the outer court of the temple near the beautiful gate which led from the outer court, the Court of the Gentiles, to the Court of the Women, *i.e.* the court in which women were allowed but beyond which they could not go.

Peter's sermon was preached in Solomon's porch on the east side of the Court of the Gentiles.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Social service in the healing and helping of the poor and disabled.
What takes the place of such miracles, in our time?
Why was this particular miracle related here?
What service to the poor and sick can be given by those who can say, "Silver and gold have I none"?
Is it true that all of us must say, "Such as I have give I thee"?
The value of miracles in spreading Christianity.
Peter s Sermon, its adaptation to the circumstances.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church.* Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Social Life,* "Calls for Healing in the East." Edersheim's *The Temple and its Services.* Stifler's *Introduction to the Acts.* Dr. A. J. Gordon's *Ministry of Healing. Miracle and Science,* Bible Miracles examined by the methods, rules, and tests of Jurisprudence, by Francis J. Lamb, Attorney at Law. ($1.50 net. Bibliotheca Co.) Prof. Charles R. Brown's *Faith and Health.*

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

On the "Beautiful Gate," see Phillips Brooks' *Sermons* on this story. The poem "Wrought Into Gold," in Peloubet's *Suggestive Illustrations on the Acts,* p. 223. Whittier's *Poems,* "Our Master." The sermon by Maurice on this chapter, in his *Acts of the Apostles,* is very suggestive.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate, by Raphael.* *Peter and John distributing alms,* by Masaccio. *Healing of the lame man,* by Poussin.*

Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth *hour.*

This lesson may be well taught in a series of scenes, as of moving pictures.

Scene I. (Three o'clock in the afternoon.) **PETER AND JOHN ON THEIR WAY TO PRAYER MEETING,** v. 1. **Now Peter and John.** Two chiefest among the apostles, and most advanced in the knowledge of Jesus. "The eldest and the youngest, probably, of the noble twelve." They were old friends at Bethsaida, and partners in the fishing business on the Sea of Galilee (Luke 5: 10). They were both disciples of John the Baptist. Both had followed Jesus almost from the first. Both were with him on the Mount of Transfiguration, and within the gates of Gethsemane. Widely different in character, they were closest of friends, alike in principle, devotion, and purpose.

Two by Two. It is a great advantage in Christian work that the workers should go two together. So Moody and Sankey went on their evangelizing tours, one a preacher the other a singer. Neither one alone was half as valuable as the two together. The two friends must be set to the same key, and each note must harmonize with the others. They form two parts to the same tune. They are like complementary colors — very different, and yet both formed by rays of light, and so adapted one to the other that they belong together, and each is brighter and better, more effective, because of the presence of the other.

"And as of old by two and two
His herald saints the Saviour sent
To soften hearts like morning dew,
Where He to shine in mercy meant;

"So evermore He deems His Name
Best honour'd and His way prepar'd,
When watching by His altar-flame
He sees His servants duly pair'd.

"He loves when age and youth are met,
Fervent old age and youth serene,
Their high and low in concord set
For sacred song, Joy's golden mean."

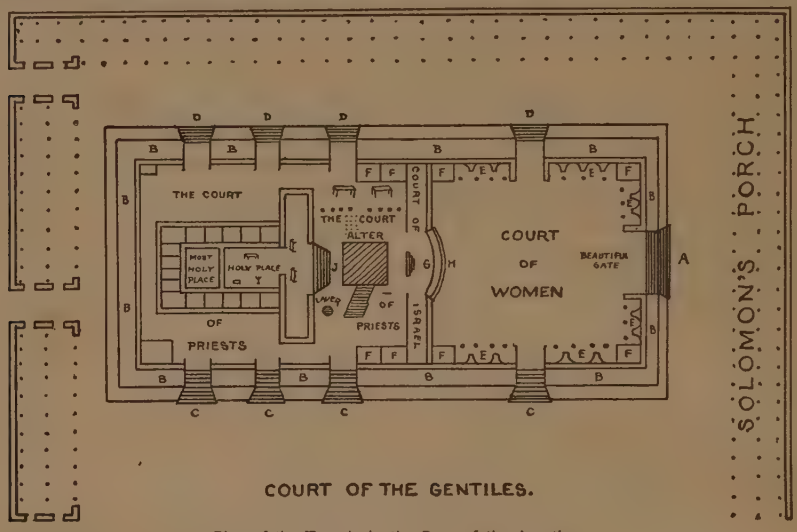
"So when two work together, each for each
Is quick to plan, and can the other teach;
But when alone one seeks the best to know,
His skill is weaker and his thoughts are slow."

Went up, Am. R., "were going up," **together into the Temple.** Leaving their homes they would go up the Temple Hill through the outer gate into Solomon's pillared portico and the Court of the Gentiles, which they crossed and went toward the steps which led through the Gate Beautiful up into the court of the women, in which men

2. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

and women could both go to worship. There was a small court beyond where only men could go. It was in the court of the women that the assembly for worship was held.

At the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour, *i.e.* three o'clock in the afternoon. Those in this court could see the altar of sacrifice, the type of consecration and forgiveness, and most of them could see the golden altar of incense within the holy



Plan of the Temple in the Days of the Apostles.

A. Where the lame beggar met Peter and John.
B. Terraces.
C, D. Gates to the Holy House.
E. Money chests.
F. Courts and Chambers.
G, H. Steps and gate to Court of Priests.
J. Steps up to the Holy Place.

The Altar of Incense was in the Holy Place, with the candlestick and Table of Shewbread.

sanctuary, and all could witness the ascending incense, the symbol and visible expression of prayer. It was an aid to devotion, as all forms of worship are intended to be. The voice, the natural forms, the bowed head, are real helps to the sincere spirit; and the spirit, as President Hopkins used to say, will die out if all natural forms of expressing it are neglected.

The Old and the New Forms of Worship. It was the custom of the early Christians to worship in their old accustomed way, as well as in the new ways taught them by the Spirit. If they broke " the old bottles " before " the new bottles " were prepared, they would lose the very spirit and power of worship. As it was, they filled the old forms full of the spirit of worship, and thus were prepared to use the new alone.

Regular Times of Worship. The spiritual life is not confined to routine, but at times bursts all such bounds. And yet regular hours of worship and prayer and reading of the Bible are a great help toward a high, spiritual daily life, just as regular hours for meals are best for bodily health. Habit is a mighty power for good. It is so much capital laid up, so that we may give our time and strength to other things. The author of *Blessed be Drudgery* shows how valuable in the discipline of life is regular, compulsory routine. Habits may become a chain, but they also may become a golden stairway to heaven. See the article " Habit," in Professor James' *Psychology*.

Scene II. **THEY MEET A LAME BEGGAR SITTING BY THE GATE BEAUTIFUL OF THE TEMPLE**, vs. 2, 3. *The Gate Beautiful* was probably the entrance from the court of the Gentiles to the court of the women where the worshippers were at prayer. A flight of stairs led up to this court. It was in the eastern wall of the inner court, opposite Solomon's Porch, and was the main entrance. This gateway had

3. Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.
4. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

magnificent doors of Corinthian brass seventy-five feet high, and adorned with plates of silver and gold. Compare the magnificent gates to the cathedrals of Europe, especially the splendid bronze doors of the Baptistry at Florence, which Michelangelo said were fit to be the gates of Paradise.

Our Gates Beautiful. There are many beautiful gates in life to higher and better things. The Gate of Hope, the Gate of Love, the Gate of Character, the Gate of Faithfulness, the Gate of Prayer. Jesus Christ is the Beautiful Gate to eternal life.

When Peter and John approached this gate they saw there a lame beggar. "As this gate was the principal entrance, fortunate was the beggar who could secure a seat there. The same custom continues without the slightest change throughout the East. The lepers, the blind, the cripples, have each their accustomed spot in the thoroughfares, but especially outside the city gates, and outside the doors of the mosques, to which they are led or carried daily by their friends, and where they sit, with their wooden bowls in front of them to receive the alms of the passers-by, uttering their piteous, ceaseless wail." — *Tristram.*

Note. The kindest and most sympathetic people in the world are praying people. Persons who obey the first table of the law are most likely to obey the second. Nine tenths of all the money raised for benevolent purposes, and for the support of our charitable institutions, comes from the pockets of those who go "up to the temple at the hour of prayer." Giving is a part of worship, one way of expressing love and devotion to God.

This lame man was peculiarly unfortunate. He was born lame. He was poor. He had to be carried by friends to the Temple. He had been thus for 40 years.

3. Who seeing Peter and John. As these were well known men frequenting the temple, where this man was wont to be brought, it would seem that he must have known something about them.

Scene III. **PETER AND JOHN GIVE THE LAME MAN THE BEST POSSIBLE HELP**, vs. 4–8. **Peter, fastening his eyes upon him**, with intense gaze, as if to see into his very soul, whether he was one in whom faith could be awakened, and to whom it would be wise and safe to impart the blessing of healing. Our word "attention" has the same meaning. **With John.** "Peter is spokesman, but John takes part, though silently." — *Maclaren.* The faith of both apostles was united in this peculiarly difficult cure. **Said, Look on us.** Calling his attention to what they were about to do, and awakening faith and obedience. He probably knew something of the divine power working through them, and of the miracles of healing already wrought by the Apostles. (2 : 43.)

Julius von Schnorr.

Peter Cures a Lame Man.

"It has been doubted whether the faith by which the cure was effected was the faith of the man himself, or of the two apostles. Surely there should be no doubt. There must have been faith on his part, for without that he could not be cured (Luke 7 : 50; 8 : 48). But there was faith on the part of Peter and John." — *Ramsay.* For the very best part of the lame man's cure was his spiritual healing, the uplift into the new life. His soul was even more changed than his body. And the apostles could have no power except through faith in Jesus.

5. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.
6. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.
7. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up; and immediately his feet and ancle bones received strength.
8. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

5, 6. When the lame man **gave heed unto them**, and had faith enough to expect something, he knew not what or how much, Peter said, **Silver and gold have I none.** None with him. Or, more probably, in addition to that fact, he had no property for his own support, but was dependent on others. He had left all to follow Jesus. The apostles had not enriched themselves by the generosity of the new converts. **Such as I have** (Am. R., " what I have ") **give I thee.** What did he have? He had the promises of Jesus. He had faith to heal. He had the power to heal in the name of Jesus. He had the enduement of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. He had the Gospel with all its blessings, and the power to present the Gospel to the lame man and to lead him to Jesus. Peter had greater gifts to bestow than if he had possessed " the wealth of Ormus or of Ind," or had " Affluent Fortune emptied all her horn " into his cup. **In the name.** The name expresses his whole being, — his character, powers, as the Son of God. **Of Jesus Christ** (*i.e.* the Messiah) **of Nazareth,** as the efficient cause, as the real living giver, for Christ healed in his own name, the apostles in Christ's name. Because this expressed the real facts of the case. **Rise up and walk**, or simply " walk " as in Am. R.

7. In order to assist his faith, and to give aid to feet that had never learned to walk, as an expression of sympathy, and an assurance of the source whence the healing came, Peter **took him by the right hand and lifted** (" raised," Am. R.) **him up: and immediately his feet and ancle bones received strength.**

8. **And he leaping up**, as Peter had bidden him to " rise up " (Auth. ver.), he then **stood** for a moment **and walked** (the verb is imperfect tense, " began to walk," Am. R.). Notice the faith of the man, — weak and helpless as he was, he immediately obeyed the apostle's commands. He did not wait until he felt that his limbs were strengthened, but at once obeyed the divine injunction. **And entered with them into the temple** through the Gate Beautiful that led to the court where the people were entering to worship God. The crowds had doubtless stopped for a few moments to see what was going on, and were amazed to see this man, who for the 40 years of his life had never put one foot before the other, now walking and leaping with " the peculiar movements," as Kitto suggests, " characteristic of the first efforts in the unknown art of walking," and all the time shouting his praises to God. His first thought was to return thanks to God for his great deliverance. This shows that he was cured in soul as well as body. Praise is as natural to a child of God as his morning song to a bird, or the gushing of the waters to a fountain.

Illustration. " It is said of Kaspar Hauser, who was confined in a German prison from birth till he was 17 years old, that when he first came out he could not walk without stumbling."

Scene IV. **MODERN LIGHT FROM AN ANCIENT STORY.** (Discussions in the Class.)

First. Such as I Have Give I Thee. Only what a person has can he give to others, and only in so far as he really possesses it. Pictures of fire will not warm, nor will semblances of virtues impart virtues. If a man has money he can give money. If he has truth he can impart truth. If one has courage, hope, love, goodness, he can infuse them into other souls. If he has strength he can use it for others. " To be comes before To do " in the grammar of Christianity. It is hard to lift others above our own level. If he himself is full of doubts, hate, ill-temper, bad passions, it is these he will impart to those around him, and by no means can such a one impart to others the good he has not himself. Hence it is that the most important element in teaching and in preaching is the man behind them. A cold church cannot warm the impenitent to life. We cannot kindle others unless we ourselves are on fire. We need to pray with Frances Ridley Havergal:

" O lead me, Lord, that I may lead
The wandering and the wayward feet;
O feed me, Lord, that I may feed
The hungering ones with manna sweet.

" O strengthen me, that while I stand
Firm on the rock, and strong in Thee,
I may stretch out a loving hand
To wrestlers with the troubled sea."

Second. Peter gave the lame man two things, each of which was worth far more than silver and gold. He gave him the power to earn his own living; not a basket of fruit, but a fruit tree. This is now generally accepted as the best and most effective method of bestowing charity, except in emergencies, while waiting for work.

Then Peter bestowed a far greater gift than this, — he brought him to the Lord Jesus, into the Christian life. Jesus in all his healings gave the higher blessing with the lower. He always did *more* than heal the body. That was the lesser part of the cure. He asked the suffering one for faith; and did all he could to kindle faith within him. Thus he cured the soul, inspired it with love, and a desire to follow Jesus, and live the better life. Dr. Richard Cabot, in an address, said: " We specialists know that after a little while our personalities are drained dry unless we have access to some far greater source than ourselves, and I believe, as we face the gigantic problems in our special fields, we are worse than foolish — we are insane — if we do not call to our aid the greatest of all powers, the power of religion."

Third. Wayside Ministries. This opportunity came to the apostles by the wayside, while they were on the way to another duty. Some of our best privileges and most useful hours come to us in this way, as rows of peach trees grew up by the roadside where the soldiers threw the stones of the peaches they had eaten, and as the straw in which the artist Thorwaldsen's statues were packed brought over from Rome the seeds of new flowers to adorn the gardens of Copenhagen. We are to be ever on the lookout for unexpected and wayside opportunities to do good.

Fourth. **Peter took him by the right hand, and lifted him up.** " Where faith has healing value, it need not and ought not to displace, it should supplement, those other agencies which experience indicates as having value for recovery. ' Shall we trust our camels to Allah to-night ? ' his servant said to Mohammed, when they were pitching their camp at an oasis in the desert. ' Yes,' replied the prophet, ' but tie them first.' " — *Rev. C. R. Brown in Faith and Health.*

Fifth. Peter did for the lame man, through the living Jesus, just what Jesus had been accustomed to do in the presence of Peter before his crucifixion, — miracles of help that led to salvation, never for himself, never for show or magic, never to prove a doctrine, but always to help and bless mankind, and prove his divine character and his power as the Messiah. The miracles testified to a fact.

Certain persons say they do not believe in miracles, but usually they have a wrong definition of what a miracle is. It is not the breaking of any law of nature. It is God's doing with his mighty power the same kind of power over nature as man is doing in his lesser power. And what is done in each case is a testimony and proof of the person who does it.

For instance, Professor Thomson, the great brain expert, tells us that the brain of the chimpanzee and orang apes " are exactly like the brain of a man. As Huxley showed, the human brain does not possess a single small convolution which is not also present in the brains of these apes." Suppose now that some visitor from Mars should see these two manlike beings, how could he know which was man and which was ape? Only by what they could do. The man could read and write, build houses, railroads, transform a wilderness into a garden. The chimpanzee could do none of these things. What the man did was the proof that he had a soul implanted by God.

So Jesus did works that man could not do. His miracles were signs and proof that he was not a mere man, but the Son of God in a far higher sense than man is; the promised Messiah, confirmed by his character and teachings. Without all these he could not have convinced the Jews that he was the Messiah. Jesus, a Galilean, a carpenter, associated with fishermen, untrained in the Jewish higher schools, seemed very far in every way from the magnificent conquering king they expected their Messiah to be. There is no way of explaining the development and progress of Christianity against every obstacle, its conquest of Rome, its present condition as the source of the highest civilization in the world, — except by what Jesus did and was, his miracles that proved his supernatural powers, to which he frequently appealed.

We do not need that kind of Miracles to-day. For we see the supernatural works of the Risen Jesus in what He has done and is doing in the world. No other religion has done such wonders as Christianity is doing to-day all over the world. Take one example:

A Modern Miracle. (Quoted from the *Youth's Companion.*)

" ' Of course, no one believes in miracles nowadays,' said Mr. Hardy to his neighbor, Mr. Clark.

9. And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

10. And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

11. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

12. And when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?

" ' That depends on what you mean by " miracles," ' said Mr. Clark, thoughtfully. ' I believe in them myself.'

" ' You mean that you think miracles occurred in the time of Christ. They certainly don't occur now. Miracles belong to the age of superstition, to the childhood of the race.'

" ' I don't know about that,' said Mr. Clark. ' If you agree that a miracle is a change due to supernatural power, I can show you a miracle to-night right here in this city. Will you go with me and promise to look and listen without prejudice? '

" ' Surely I will.'

" The two men met after supper that night, and Clark took his friend to a part of the city in which Hardy had never been before. They went into a little hall between two saloons, and took seats with a crowd of men and women so dilapidated in appearance that Hardy whispered to Clark, ' What sort of place have you got me into? This must be a meeting of all the " downs and outs." '

" ' It is,' said Clark, briefly.

" After the leader had given out a hymn and made a short prayer, a big man with a voice of thunder rose and spoke.

" For half an hour he poured forth a perfect torrent of appeal to that roomful of lost men and women. He begged, urged, commanded them to come to God.

" When he sat down, a score of men and women went forward, and the big man knelt and prayed for them in a voice so tender that Hardy found his face wet with tears.

" He and Clark went out on the street.

" ' Well,' said Clark, ' you have seen your miracle.'

" ' I grant I have seen an interesting sight and heard a good temperance talk, but where is the miracle? '

" ' Nine months ago that man you heard was a professional gambler and thief. He has been in state prison six different times. He has spent a fortune in drink and vice. To-day he is engaged in an honest trade. He has abandoned all his old habits, and every hour he can spare he labors to redeem lost men and women. He is a devout, prayerful man. I say he is a modern miracle, as great as any that Jesus Christ ever performed. Could anything except miraculous power make that man what he is to-night? '

" Hardy was silent. Finally he said, ' You are right. I shall never disbelieve in miracles again.' "

Scene V. **PETER'S APPLICATION OF THIS MIRACLE TO THE PEOPLE. IN SOLOMON'S PORTICO,** vs. 9–26. **9. And all the people saw him.** The miracle was public, before crowds of people, and his ecstatic expressions of joy called their attention to him. They would also see that the change in Peter was as great a miracle as the change in the lame man.

10. **And they knew,** *Exp. Gk. Test.*, " recognized," that this walking and leaping man was the same man that they were accustomed to see begging. There was no question of his identity.

11. The lame man holding the hands of Peter and John went with them, all three together through the Gate Beautiful, down the steps, across the court to Solomon's Porch that was opposite. The crowds filled with wonder and amazement followed them.

Advertising the Church. A recent book by Rev. C. F. Reisner advocates the duty and success of advertising the church. He relates his experience in New York and

Denver. "Nearly two million pieces of advertising matter we recirculated, including every kind that could be discovered which was within the range of the meagre financial resources which every church faces." "It must not allow itself," he says, "to be counted of no importance or to be made insignificant. It is the heart, the vital centre, the fountain-head of the best life of any community. It must demonstrate that fact if it is to remain worthy of the name." By a coincidence *The Edison Monthly* happens to print an especially interesting article on the subject of illuminated church signs. Electric crosses were placed upon the spires. "This blazing symbol, high on the slender spire of St. Augustine's Chapel, was held at the time to be one of the most impressive sights in New York." Electric signs illuminated the entrances to the churches.

This is wise and useful, especially in the cities. I remember well the scene when years ago, late one evening in my native city of New York, with a friend and policeman I stood where on one side of the street saloons were blazing with light, while the Mission Church across the way was dull and dark without a ray.

But the real advertising of the church is Peter's way. It is what the church does for the good of man. It is the men made better. It is the good deeds done. It is the service it gives to the poor, to the sick, to those without the Gospel, to every good word and work. It is the number of persons converted to Christ.

Illustration. General Booth of the Salvation Army in his early ministry had his little chapel near the iron-workers. These men saw the red-hot iron converted into useful instruments. "They saw that same thing happening in the chapel of Mr. Booth, and they dubbed it 'The Converting Shop.' They saw there a great power take hold of men's lives and change them. They became red-hot in heart, and then something laid hold on them; and, when they came out, they were different. They knew what it meant." The church that is a "converting shop" is sure to be known, and one which draws men to Jesus.

Peter then preached Christ as the Messiah their Saviour. He showed the people their great sin in crucifying their Messiah.

But God raised him to life, and he is now the ever-living *Prince of life.*

This Prince of life, not Peter and John, wrought the marvellous cure they had seen.

They committed the crime in ignorance, and God transformed the death into an atonement for sin as foretold by their prophets.

He urged them to repent. Two blessings would follow, — (1) Their sins would be blotted out. (2) They would enjoy the times of refreshing, such as believers were then enjoying. **Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.**

LESSON VI. — February 6.

THE BOLDNESS OF PETER AND JOHN. — Acts 4:1–31.

PRINT vs. 8–21. COMMIT vs. 12, 13.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.* — 1 COR. 16:13.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The progress of the Gospel in Jerusalem was like the River in Ezekiel's vision (ch. 47). It began its flow near the Altar of the Temple. After a time the little rivulet became deep enough to cover the ankles; soon the waters rose to the knees, then to the loins, then it became deep enough to swim in. Trees of every kind grew on either side bearing fruit. The stream flowed through deserts and transformed them. Everything lived which the waters touched, and even the leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations.

This is an excellent picture of the River of the Water of Life, that flowed from Jesus Christ. In the Acts we see this stream growing wider and deeper, richer in its fruits, and in its healing power for both body and soul. No obstacles can stop its course. The whole world cannot prevent its onward flow.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The same afternoon as the last lesson, and the following morning.

Place. — Arrested in Solomon's Porch. Imprisoned somewhere in Jerusalem. Tried in the hall of the Sanhedrin. A

room in Jerusalem where the disciples were accustomed to meet.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 11, 12, 13, 19, 29–31.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why Peter and John were arrested.
Why the Sadducees were especially opposed to Peter's teaching.
Persecution giving the apostles their only opportunity to preach the Gospel to the rulers.
The boldness of Peter and John, and its sources.
Explain why Jesus is the only name whereby we can be saved.
They took knowledge that the apostles had been with Jesus.
For what did the apostles pray, and the answer.
The picture of the Christian church at this time and its advance over the description in the last verses of ch. 2.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: A Lesson on Christian Courage.

I. The Story of the Arrest of Peter and John while Courageously Serving their Master, vs. 1–4.
II. The Story of Splendid Courage at their Trial before the Supreme Court of the Jews, vs. 5–14.
III. The Story of Courage in defying the Authorities who Commanded Silence when God Commanded them to Speak, vs. 15–22.
IV. The Story of a Courageous Church, vs. 23–31.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Suggestive Illustrations on the Acts (Holman Co., Phila.). Stifler's *Introduction to the Acts*, "Spiritual Guidance"; Pierson's *Acts of the Holy Spirit*, "Fulness and Boldness of the Spirit"; Dr. William M. Taylor's *Peter the Apostle*, chap. 14. "Bartlet's remarks about the motives which moved both the council in its action and the apostles in theirs (*Apostolic Age*, 18–23), are particularly sane and clear."

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Lowell's *Poems*, "The Present Crisis."

Mrs. Ozora Davis's *Hero Tales*.

Spurgeon's *Sermons in Candles*, pp. 121, 122, 165. Luther's experience as given in Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*, "The Hero as Priest."

Plato's story of Socrates' trial at Athens.

Hugh Latimer's Sermon before Henry VIII. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Tales of missionary heroism and courage, such as Dr. Paton's life, the story of the Hawaiian Islands and of the Huguenots in France. Dr. Barton's *The Missionary and His Critics*. The chapter on "The Missionary and the Tourist" illustrates how little the Sadducees would know of the workings of the early church.

Blue Sky, the story of Mrs. Caswell's work among the Indians, is intensely interesting.

Thinking Black, the experience of the African missionary, Dan Crawford.

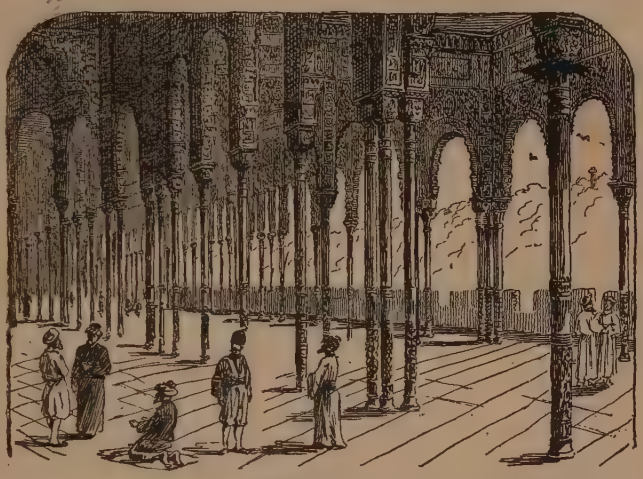
Fifty Missionary Heroes, by Julia H. Johnson (Revell).

I. **THE STORY OF THE ARREST OF PETER AND JOHN, WHEN COURAGEOUSLY SERVING THEIR MASTER**, vs. 1–4. In our last lesson we saw Peter and John, with the cured lame man standing near them, addressing the crowds in Solomon's porch or cloister, a pillared portico open to the court of the temple. The well-known lame man had been healed, and was standing by the apostles, while Peter, taking the miracle as his text, had been preaching Jesus as the Messiah and Saviour. See 3:12–26. John also addressed them on the same theme. There must have been no little excitement, and doubtless the Temple services had been seriously interfered with and the audience diminished by the rush of the people to Solomon's Porch, attracted by the strange event and the new teaching. The priests would naturally resent any usurpation of their place as the leaders of worship and instruction, and any lessening of their influence. But there were more urgent reasons than this for interfering with the apostles.

Three classes were opposed to them. (1) The Priests (chief priests, according to the Margin). (2) The Captain of the Temple guard, himself a priest and second only to the high-priest, and superintendent of the bands of Levites who were on duty by turns. (3) The Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection, and were in alliance with the Roman power.

2. **Being grieved**, the Greek is literally, "being pained or troubled all through," "thoroughly worked up." In the first place, "They were incensed at the fact that men whom they would regard as crude religious demagogues were haranguing the people at all within the precincts sacred to official religion, but still more by what they

gathered of the preaching itself." In the second place, "the claim that resurrection from the dead had actually taken place, and that quite recently and in Jerusalem, in the person of Jesus — one whom they had helped to bring to the cross as a religious fanatic — was intolerable. It was bad enough to have ignorant men preaching under their very eyes a doctrine which they resisted. But to have it proclaimed, not as an abstract belief, but as a fact put beyond question in a concrete case — and that by men of the people, face to face with the people — was something far worse." In the third place, "such preaching was fraught with imminent danger. For this 'risen' Jesus was held by his adherents to have been thereby proved to be after all the Messiah, and no impostor. But such a belief, if it become general, seemed to spell '*revolt from Rome*,' Roman rule being inconsistent with that of the Messiah of popular expectation (cf. 5:36 f., 21:38). And a Messianic uprising, with all the severity and further restriction of native authority which it involved, was the thing they most dreaded." — *New Century Bible.* For the general expectation of the Jews at this time was of a national king who would deliver them from the yoke of Rome.



Solomon's Porch.

It was natural therefore that the Jewish authorities should arrest Peter and John, and, as it was nearly six o'clock in the evening, beyond which hour it was unlawful for the Sanhedrin to try any one, and so too late to assemble that body, they put them in prison to await their trial the next morning.

An Encouraging Word immediately follows in the record. The two men were in prison, but the work went on. 4. **Howbeit**, in spite of all this opposition. **Many of them which heard the word believed.** The preaching of the apostles had not been in vain. The lame man remained, and the words spoken were laid up in the hearts of the people. **And the number of the men**, in addition to the women, **was** "came to be" increased, from the last report of 3000, to about 5000, "representing the total number of believers." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

Persecution cannot destroy the truth. Christianity grows, whatever obstacles impede its way. Its progress through the centuries has been a triumphal march over difficulties, opposition, hatred, and every obstacle enemies could place in its way.

> "Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet 'tis Truth alone is strong,
> And, albeit she wander outcast now, I see around her throng
> Troups of beautiful, tall angels, to enshield her from all wrong." — *James Russell Lowell.*

Bunyan in his *Pilgrim's Progress* well illustrates this truth: "Then I saw in my dream that the Interpreter took Christian by the hand, and led him to a place where there was a fire burning against a wall, and one standing by it, always casting much water upon it, to quench it; yet did the fire burn higher and hotter. Then said Christian, 'What means this?' The Interpreter answered, 'This fire is the work of grace in the heart. He that casts water upon it, to extinguish and put it out, is the Devil. But in that thou seest the fire notwithstanding burn higher and hotter, thou shalt also see the reason of that.' So he had him about to the back side of the wall, where he saw a man with a vessel of oil in his hand, which he did also continually cast (but secretly) into the fire. Then said Christian, 'What means this?' The Interpreter answered, 'This is Christ, who continually with the oil of his grace, maintains the work begun in the heart.'"

8. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

Sweeping Out the Atlantic Ocean. — Sidney Smith tells us that in 1824 a great flood set in upon the town of Sidmouth, England. The tide rose to an incredible height; the waves rushed in upon the houses, and everything was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime and terrible storm, an old lady who lived upon the beach was seen at the door of her house with mop and pattens, trundling her mop and squeezing out the sea water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. That is the picture of those who are trying to sweep away the Gospel of Christ. Dame Partington could more easily sweep out the Atlantic Ocean.

II. **THE STORY OF SPLENDID COURAGE AT THEIR TRIAL BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT OF THE JEWS**, vs. 5–14. **And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers.** Here, "chief priests." "It included beyond all doubt the most prominent representatives of the priesthood, belonging chiefly, if not entirely, to the Sadducean party." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* **And Elders**, leading men of the Sanhedrin who were neither priests nor **Scribes**, who were professional lawyers, teachers and interpreters of the Jewish law.

6. **And Annas**, the ex-high priest, the father of **Caiaphas** the real high priest; but Annas dominated the office. **And John, and Alexander,** probably influential members, and **kindred of the high priest**, also members of the Sanhedrin. Of all the seventy-one members, it is probable that the Scribes were of the Pharisees' party, and the others, Sadducees. All these were **gathered together at Jerusalem**, in the hall of the Sanhedrin.

This Council Hall, according to the Encyclopædia Britannica and the latest Bible Dictionaries, was within the Temple court, between the "Xystus" (that is the path along the front of the Portico) and the Temple building, in the Hall of Hewn-stones, on the west side. "The members sat in a semicircle in order to be able to see each other; in front stood the clerks of the court, and behind these, three rows of the disciples of the 'learned men.' The prisoner had always to be dressed in mourning." — *Oesterley in Hastings's Bib. Dic.*

Sanhedrin in Session.

7. When all was ready, and the two prisoners were **set in the midst**, the cured lame man being present, probably as a witness, — the president of the council asked, **By what power, or by** (Gr. "in," under the influence of) **what name have ye done this.** *Power* is force, *name* is authority. They wanted to convict Peter and John of sorcery by having performed the cure by the spirit and in the name of a crucified malefactor. They hoped to bring the apostles under the awful death sentence pronounced in the Jewish law (Deut. 13). They had no power to execute the death sentence, but must deliver the prisoners to the Roman authorities. But Peter and John had in no degree transgressed Roman law.

8. **Then Peter** (John was just as brave, but Peter was the natural orator) **filled with the Holy Ghost**; Am. R. "Spirit." In fulfilment of Christ's promise (Matt. 10:19, 20). Thus Peter was given courage to speak the truth, and guided to the choice of the right things to say, and the best way of saying them. This was his first experience in speaking before this august assembly, and he, an unlearned fisherman, may well have quailed before such a tribunal with such power over his fortunes, even while he rejoiced at the opportunity to preach the gospel to them. "Peter, 'filled with the Holy Ghost,' is a thousand Peters: Peter multiplied by the very Deity. Peter — a straw blown away by the mocking wind, by himself. But Peter 'filled with the Holy Ghost' was a man of war, a mighty captain, a soldier not to be put down; clothed with heavenly panoply, eloquent with heaven's thunder, gracious with

9. If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

10. Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

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heaven's love." **Said unto them**, gracefully acknowledging their authority as **rulers** and **elders.**

9. **If**, this phrase, according to Knowling, is " chosen not without oratorical nicety: **if**, as is the fact, **we this day be examined**, etc., Am. R. " are examined concerning a good deed done to an impotent man." " The ' we ' expresses at the same time the righteous indignation of the Apostles in contrast to the contemptuous ' you ' of ver. 7, and their surprise at the object of the present inquiry: so too in the expression ' a good deed,' St. Peter again indicates the unfairness of such inquisitorial treatment." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* Chrysostom adds: " Peter hits them hard in that they are always making a crime of such acts, finding fault with such works of benevolence." A strange charge to make against any one! But they hated the good deed because of the necessary inferences and results that grew out of it. The statement itself is an answer to the charge. **By what means**, the Greek is only " by what," which may be masculine or neuter, " in whom " or " by what."

Note, before we consider Peter's sharp arraignment of the Council, that in saying what he did he was a true gentleman, according to the definition given by Arthur C. Benson in the *North American Review.*

" ' How do you define a gentleman, then ? ' said the lawyer, leaning forward at a certain point of the conversation.

" ' The gentleman, it has been said, is a man who is never offensive unintentionally,' said the parson.

" Two of the guests murmured ' intentionally ' by way of a correction, and the parson smiled.

" ' No,' he said, ' a gentleman is sometimes offensive when honor and reason demand it, but then he *means* to be. The man who is not a gentleman is often offensive when he does not mean to be.'

" ' But is he always a gentleman when he is intentionally offensive? ' said the lawyer.

" ' The gentleman is,' said the parson with a smile."

Peter gave a straightforward, true answer to their question; and that answer had in it the qualities, and the tones, a true Christian gentleman would naturally use under the circumstances.

10. **Be it known unto you all**, who hitherto have not taken note of what was going on, **and to all the people of Israel**, many of whom had already learned about the risen Jesus; while the Sanhedrin themselves, by this trial, were doing their best to spread the truth about Jesus far and wide.

That by (better " in " as in the Revisions) **the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.** Peter speaks the hated word boldly, so that there would be no doubt as to whom he means. **Christ** is the Greek for the " Messiah " whom they had been expecting.

Whom God raised from the dead, reminding them that their efforts to destroy Jesus were in vain. God himself was against them. He counteracted their wickedness by doing exactly the opposite of what they had done. This fact convicted them of sin. They were arrayed against God. Moreover, Peter insists on the fact of the resurrection because that was the crowning proof that Jesus was the Messiah, and was then living in heaven. **Doth this man stand here before you whole.** Peter doubtless pointed to him. The irrefutable fact was before them. He was a specimen of what the true Messiah would do. Only a Living Jesus could do such a work.

Facts are the irrefutable evidence of Christianity. They are like Joseph's wagons. The words of Jacob's sons could not convince him that Joseph was alive, but when he saw the wagons his son had sent, then he believed. So the religion of Jesus is not a mere theory; it is proved abundantly by facts. The lives that have been made better, the fact that it does change for good all those who receive it into their hearts, that wherever it enters a community or a nation it elevates them — these are the unanswerable witnesses to Christ and Christianity.

11. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

12. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

13. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

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11. **This**, Am. R., "He," **is the stone which was set at nought of you builders**, who are hoping to build up your nation into a Messianic Kingdom. You refused to believe Him, you neglected Him, you had Him crucified, you rejected the very foundation of your hopes and desires. But He, by His resurrection from the dead, **is become** ("was made," Am. R.) **the head of the corner**, the chief foundation of the Messianic Kingdom.

Peter rose far above the desire to escape imprisonment. He had found his only chance to preach the Gospel to the Jewish rulers and leaders. Every point he made was an argument to persuade them to repent and accept Jesus as the Messiah and thus save both themselves and the Nation.

12. **Neither is there salvation** (Greek, "the salvation" they were looking for) **in any other.** Jesus was their only hope. **For there is none other name.** *Name* here stands for Jesus Christ himself, and all there is in him of wisdom, power, love, divineness; just as a man's name to a note stands for all a man is and has, — his property, his character, his ability, his integrity. **Under heaven** anywhere on earth. **Whereby we**, all members of the human race, **must be saved**, with an absolute necessity to be saved in this way if saved at all. (Am. R. reads this verse: "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.") This was true of the Nation, and of the individual; of salvation, material and spiritual. There was, and still is, no other power under heaven that could have saved the Jewish nation from the destruction that came upon them thirty-five or forty years later, as there is no other power that can save each soul from sin and death. For while every great religion has beautiful precepts, and has a real influence, yet only in Jesus are combined all the elements of power to save both individuals and nations, in body and soul, for time and for eternity.

Peter's speech was ended, and the Council began to consider the situation. During the defence of Peter, they noticed first, **the boldness of Peter and John.** It required great courage to speak as they did to those who had so much power over them. The courage was founded on their absolute faith in Jesus as the Messiah, and confidence in the truth of their position. Such boldness was very remarkable in any one before such a tribunal.

Then as they recalled Peter's speech, **they perceived that** Peter and John **were unlearned**, uneducated in the professional schools, untrained in literature and the vocabulary and pronunciations of the learned. **And ignorant men**, literally "a private person, as opposed to any one who holds office in the State; but as the Greeks held that without political life there was no true education of a man, it was not unnatural that the word for 'ignorant' should acquire a somewhat contemptuous meaning." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* "There was then probably an even more marked distinction than at the present day between the speech and thought of a fisherman or shepherd and of an educated person." — *Ramsay.*

They marvelled how such men could have gained such knowledge, logic, eloquence, and freedom of speech. Then they remembered that there was one explanation: **They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.**

To be with Jesus is to live in communion with him, to have him in our thoughts, to love him with all our hearts, to go to him for guidance, to make him our daily companion, to be in sympathy with his plans and purposes, to feel his presence and his approval, to do all things for his glory, to dwell much on his words and his example, seeing his face in the mirror of the Scriptures. This daily companionship, this shining of his life upon ours, will change us into the same image from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord.

"His being working in my own,
The footsteps of his life in mine."

14. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

15. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves,

16. Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them *is* manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny *it*.

17. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

18. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

This likeness will show in our daily life and character; men will thus see it as the effect of our union with Christ; this will point them to the Saviour.

Illustration. The clay that has been with the roses, the clothes from the scented chest, tell us where they have been. The taint of bad company clings to us in spite of all we can do. Moses' face shone when he came from the mountain after forty days with God.

"You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still."

"People seldom improve when they have no other model than themselves to copy after." — *Goldsmith.*

A PERSIAN FABLE

"A Persian fable says: One day
A wanderer found a lump of clay
So redolent of sweet perfume
Its odors scented all the room.
'What art thou?' was his quick demand.
'Art thou some gem from Samarcand,
Or spikenard in this rude disguise,
Or other costly merchandise?'
'Nay: I am but a lump of clay.'

"'Then whence this wondrous perfume — say!'
'Friend, if the secret I disclose,
I have been dwelling with the rose.'
Sweet parable! and will not those
Who love to dwell with Sharon's rose,
Distil sweet odors all around,
Though low and mean themselves are found?
Dear Lord, abide with us that we
May draw our perfume fresh from thee."

14. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them. "We are not told whether the man was a prisoner [or a witness] but we may easily imagine that the restored cripple, in his gratitude and faith would desire to be with his benefactors." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

Another instance of Courage. "Great was the boldness of the man that even in the judgment hall he had not left them." — *Chrysostom.*

III. **THE STORY OF COURAGE IN DEFYING THE AUTHORITIES WHO COMMANDED SILENCE WHEN GOD SAID, "SPEAK,"** vs. 15–22. **They conferred among themselves.** Luke probably heard what these private deliberations were, from some of the priests who afterwards joined the church (chap. 6 : 7) who were present.

16. Notable. Well known. **We cannot deny it.** The evidence was too strong, and too widely known. Therefore they must take some other course.

17. But that it spread no further. They might as well have tried to "dam the Nile with bulrushes." **Let us straitly** (strictly) **threaten them.** Knowing how they had fled at the arrest of their master, having heard, perhaps, of the denials of Peter, aware that they were only ordinary men, they felt sure that an order from the leading men, and the highest court of the nation, would have a powerful effect, and would be immediately obeyed.

18. They called them, *i.e.* Peter and John, back to the hall where the Sanhedrin were assembled, in order to hear their decision. **Not to speak nor to teach in the name of Jesus.** The Greek verb denotes "not to utter even a sound or whisper." "They were to make no noise about it at all."

19. But Peter and John answered. Both joined in the answer. They were agreed on the course to take. **Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more** ("rather," Am. R.) **than unto God, judg eye.** They were the mouthpieces of God, and it would not be right to refuse to speak his message.

20. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.
21. So, when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them because of the people; for all *men* glorified God for that which was done.

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20. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. For it would be ungrateful to our Master, a crime against the people, disobedience to God, contrary to our conscience, a wrong to the kingdom of heaven, treason to God's cause, and to Jesus our Messiah.

Illustration. Hugh Latimer and Henry VIII. When Hugh Latimer had offended King Henry VIII by a very plain-spoken sermon, and was commanded to make a recantation the following Sunday, he began as if in a soliloquy, " Hugh Latimer, dost thou know to whom thou art this day to speak? to the high and mighty monarch, the king's most excellent majesty, that can take away thy life, if thou offend; therefore take heed how thou speak a word that may displease." Then, changing his tone, he continued, " Hugh, Hugh, dost thou know from whence thou comest, upon whose message thou art sent, and who it is that is present with thee, and beholdeth all thy ways? even the great and mighty God, who is able to cast both body and soul into hell forever; therefore be sure that thy message is delivered faithfully." He then proceeded fearlessly to reprove the king's conduct even more plainly than before.

21. So, when they had further threatened them, trying to frighten them into keeping still. But for themselves they were afraid, afraid of the people, afraid of the Roman authorities. It is, however, probable, as Neander and Lange remark, that another reason of the present leniency of the Sanhedrin was that several of its members favored the Christians (as Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and Gamaliel). " Perhaps also the rivalry between the Sadducees and the Pharisees, may, on this occasion, have benefited the apostles." — *Gloag.* **For all men glorified God.** Therefore to have imprisoned the apostles would have appeared to the people as fighting against God; but these leaders wished to be regarded as the especial friends of God.

IV. **THE STORY OF A COURAGEOUS CHURCH**, vs. 23–31. **They went to their own company.** To the place of common resort for the disciples, for there must have been some meeting-place as headquarters for the multitude of converts, where the disciples could teach them, and all could unite in praise and prayer. Doubtless the disciples had spent the night in prayer for their two leaders in prison. **And reported all.** Showing the feeling of the Jewish leaders toward the disciples, and the storm that was gathering; and also how the Lord had fulfilled his promises and sustained them.

Their Song of Triumph. **24. And when they heard that they lifted up their voice to God with one accord.** The Greek word is a compound of words meaning " together " and " to rush along with ardor." Not necessarily of one opinion, nor that all repeated the hymn in concert, but of one zeal, one purpose, one tide of joy and triumph. " It may mean that the Hymn was uttered by one of the leaders, by St. Peter, or St. James, and answered by the responsive Amen of the rest." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* " As the whole assembly are said to lift up their voice with one accord, it would seem that they caught up and repeated the words of an inspired leader, and did not merely answer by a responsive Amen." — *Rendall.* " This hymn of praise, — the earliest Christian hymn recorded, — though borrowing at first the language of Ps. 146 : 6, and then quoting Ps. 2 : 1, 2, was obviously composed for the occasion, and prompted by the recent triumph." — *J. Q. Adams.*

Lord. The word translated " Lord " here means one who has absolute control over the world and the nations, one who rules with infinite power indeed, but also with infinite wisdom and love. It was a very appropriate term on this occasion.

Thou art God which hast made, etc., quoted from Ps. 146 : 6. This gives the foundation of their confidence, their assurance that he can and will answer their prayers.

25. By the mouth of the servant David, Psalm 2 : 1, 2.

26. The people imagine vain things. Dr. John Hall, in one of his sermons, compared the attacks of infidelity upon Christianity to a serpent gnawing at a file. As he kept on gnawing, he was greatly encouraged by the sight of the growing pile of chips, till, feeling pain and seeing blood, he found that he had been wearing his own teeth away against the file, but the file was unharmed.

"The dog barks, but the caravan passes on."

28. **For to do whatsoever thy hand**, *i.e. power*, through its natural instrumentality, **and thy counsel**, *i.e. wisdom, purpose*, **determined before to be done.** The R. V. is better, *To do whatsoever . . . thy counsel foreordained* TO COME TO PASS. God had ordained the end, but not the means which men used. "God had indeed appointed that Christ should die for all men. But he had not foreordained or decreed the means by which his death was brought about. No doubt the evil was overruled for the greatest possible good, but it remained evil still, and they who did the evil were responsible for it."

The Apostles' Prayer, vs. 29, 30. They all joined with one heart in prayer.

First. **And grant . . . that with all boldness.** This is a model prayer. They do not ask exemption from persecution and trouble; they only pray that they may do their duty. They forget themselves in their absorbing desire for the kingdom of Christ, and the two things necessary for its progress, — boldness to preach and power to work. They were wholly absorbed in the Cause of Christ.

30. **By stretching forth thine hand to heal.** As had been done in the case of the cripple at the Gate Beautiful. **Signs.** Of the truth spoken. **And wonders.** To call the attention of the people to Jesus, and to prove his divine Messiahship. Miracles were a great and essential power in giving success to the Gospel. Wondrous works, in changing the characters of men, in reforming and blessing the people, are still essential accompaniments to the successful preaching of the Gospel.

The Answers to their Prayers, v. 31. *First.* By a new baptism of the Holy Spirit. **The place was shaken.** To enable the disciples to realize more clearly the fact of the Holy Spirit's presence, just as the sound and the tongues of flame manifested the same presence on the day of Pentecost. **They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.** They received all their souls could contain. This new baptism was the source and fountain of all power and all good. The fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, and all the rest, were richer, riper, larger, better flavored, and more abundant because of this renewed gift.

Second. The result was an answer to the prayer for courage. **They spake the word of God with boldness.** So that **with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.** Peter and John tower up to heroic height. Suffering for Christ strikes out sweeter music in more heavenly strains than mere peace can awaken.

Third. As we see from the following verses, there was unity of spirit, by which the world would recognize the spirit and power of Christ (see John 17:21).

Fourth. An increase in love, helpfulness, generous giving. **And great grace was upon them all.** All this greatly furthered the work of the Gospel. A loving graciousness, deeds of kindness that cost the doer, a spirit that breathes of heaven, are among the strongest influences for the conversion of the world.

LESSON VII. — February 13.

HUMBLED AND EXALTED. — Philippians 2:1–11.

COMMIT vs. 5–7.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich.* — 2 COR. 8:9.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

This lesson lays down a great Principle which has more and wider applications today than it could have to the ancient Philippians. And it is these on which the emphasis should be laid. To accomplish this, the teacher may well ask his scholars a week or two beforehand to collect instances to which the principles apply, —

One may gather his instances from the newspapers.

Another may bring his personal observations.

Others may gather illustrations from reading.

Others, instances in school, or home.

Others, examples from stories he has heard.

Others, illustrations from experience.

The class can discuss what is right and what is wrong in each instance, and what to do about it.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 8–11.

READ.

The whole Epistle to the Philippians.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Philippians was written at Rome about A.D. 61 or 62.

Author. — Paul, during his first imprisonment at Rome, toward the close.

To Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia, where Paul founded a church, about A.D. 50–52, and was imprisoned, and released in a remarkable way.

Sent by Epaphroditus.

The Roman Emperor was Nero.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Philippi.
The Church in Philippi.
Why Paul had a peculiar affection for the Philippian Christians.
The Epistle to the Philippians.
Vainglory, and humility.
Esteeming others better than ourselves.
This mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ.
The example of Christ.
How God exalted Him.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Christian Ideal and Goal of Character is to have the Mind of Christ.

I. THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.
II. THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH, AND THE CONDITIONS THAT PROMOTE IT, VS. 1, 2.
III. HOW TO OVERCOME THE DESTROYERS OF THE UNITY IN CHRIST, VS. 3, 4.
IV. THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST, VS. 5–11.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on the Philippians by Dr. F. A. Noble (Revell); Prof. J. R. Lightfoot (Macmillan); Dr. Robert Johnstone (Oliphant, Edinboro); Prof. J. Agar Beet (Whitaker). *The Expositor's Greek Testament, Cambridge Bible, Expositor's Bible, New Century Bible.* Farrar's *Messages of the Books* is peculiarly helpful for teachers.

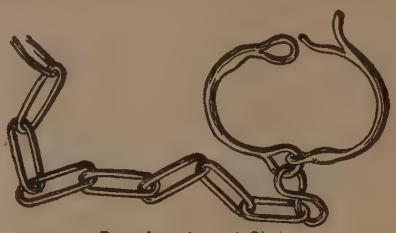
I. THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS, THE EPISTLE OF CHRISTIAN JOY. *Philippi* was the first city in Europe to which Paul came on his second missionary journey, A.D. 50–52. About ten miles from Neapolis, on the river Gangites. The city was named after Philip of Macedon, its builder. About a mile to the north of Philippi in the mountains were the famous gold mines which yielded him the enormous sum of 1000 talents ($30,000,000) a year.

The Triumvirate who gained the victory at Philippi: Octavius, Antony, Lepidus.

From C. W. King's *Antique Gems.*

On the plain west of the city near the river was fought one of the most memorable and decisive battles in history, between Augustus Cæsar (then Octavius) and Antony, of the Roman Triumvirate, on the one side, and Brutus and Cassius, on the other, B.C. 52; almost exactly a century before Paul came to win a greater victory there than Cæsar's. It is now a part of Greece.

The Philippian Church was chiefly made up of converts from heathenism, with few Jewish opponents. There seems to have been no synagogue there, for "mention is only made of some women who assembled for prayer by the river side on the Sabbath day." The converts were from a business and military community, who "could boast of the religious zeal of its inhabitants."



Part of an Ancient Chain.

How they aided Paul. On four occasions this church helped sustain him in his poverty and imprisonment. Twice they sent gifts to his support while at Thessalonica (Phil. 4:16), once while at Corinth (2 Cor. 11:9), and now they fulfilled Christ's words, "in prison and ye visited me," by sending one of their number to Rome with gifts to support him in prison. For Paul was manacled, and under the charge of a Roman guard, so that he could not work to support himself as he did in other places.

IF *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

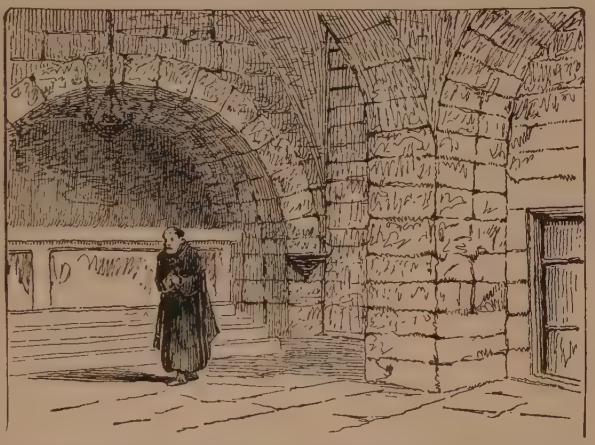
The Philippian church sent their gifts by one of their leading members, named Epaphroditus, who, arriving in the malarious season, was prostrated with a dangerous illness, probably the Roman fever. Paul sent this letter back by him on his recovery.

The fact that no other church is mentioned by name as aiding Paul by gifts in his need, furnishes no good reason for saying that they did not help him. But the Philippian church set a good example to some churches of to-day.

The Story of Ben Hassan. I remember reading somewhere of an Arab sheik, Ben Hassan, who was ever giving and doing for others; to whom people ever came for sympathy and advice. But none gave any to him. Even when the quails came so thick that men gathered more than they knew how to use, they came to him for advice as to where to bestow their bounty, but no one offered him any. He was weary from want of expressions of love.

Not a few pastors can sympathize with him. We need more Philippian Christians.

Songs in the Night. Eleven years before he wrote this letter, Paul sang songs in the night in a Philippian prison, with his feet fast in the stocks; so now a prisoner in Rome, fettered, diseased, poor, hated, he wrote this letter to the Philippian Christians, "It has been said that the sum of the whole letter is, 'I rejoice, rejoice ye!' . . . His letter is like one of those magnificent pieces of music, which, amid all its stormy fugues and mighty discords, is dominated by some inner note of triumph which at last bursts forth into irresistible and glorious victory. Amid poverty and imprisonment, with the frown of the tyrant bent on him, death seeming to stare him in the face, the fundamental note in the many-toned music of his letter is the note of joy. He recalls to our minds the runner who, at the supreme moment of Grecian history, brought to Athens the news of Marathon. Worn, panting, exhausted with the effort to be the herald of deliverance, he sank in death at the threshold of the first house which he reached with the tidings of victory; and sighed forth his gallant soul in one great sob, almost in the same words as those used by the Apostle, '*Chai'rete, Chai'romen, Rejoice ye, we too rejoice!*'" — *Farrar* in his *Messages of the Books.*



Traditional Apartment of the Centurion's House where Paul was chained by the wrist to a soldier during his first imprisonment at Rome.

Christ is the perfect example for the church. The first four verses lead up to this ideal, and the perfect ideal is presented us in detail.

II. **THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH, AND THE CONDITIONS THAT PROMOTE IT**, vs. 1, 2. **If there be therefore** such things as make Christian unity possible; **any consolation** (Am. R. "exhortation") **in Christ**. The Greek word for "consolation" has the two senses of "exhortation" and "consolation." It is closely allied to the word "Comforter" in John.

"Comforting," from two Latin words, means *making strong together*. Nothing is worthy of the name of comfort that is not invigorating, inspiring, filling the soul full of courage and strength.

The Holy Spirit comforted the disciples after the death of Jesus, just as Jesus promised. How? By making the frightened men bold as lions; by changing them into heroes; by giving joy unspeakable when persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, scattered.

2. Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.

3. *Let* nothing *be done* through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

"Ask God to give thee skill
In comfort's art,
That thou may'st consecrated be
And set apart
Unto a life of sympathy.

"For heavy is the weight of ill
In every heart;
And comforters are needed much
Of Christ-like touch."

If any comfort of love. "Almost equivalent to the word 'consolation' above, but having a suggestion of tenderness involved. It springs from his love towards them." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* "The incentive which love brings."

If any fellowship of the Spirit. Communion with the Holy Spirit, which makes all Christians one; or participation in the love, joy, peace, which the Holy Spirit produces; or "union of heart and interests prompted by the Holy Spirit." **If any bowels and mercies.** Am. R. "tender mercies and compassions." The ancients used "bowels" where we would use "heart." Any warmth of love, and mutual burden bearing and sympathy for one another in their various trials.

2. Fulfil ye my joy. "Make full my joy" (Am. R.). Make its cup full; complete it. It was his joy in seeing the church he had founded, and the Christians he loved fulfilling their mission, and living the ideal life, by being **like-minded**, "of the same mind" (Am. R.), *thinking the same thing*, in accord with the two respects which follow: "(1) a unity of affection, **having the same love**; (2) a unity of sentiment, **of one accord**. The general expression is then repeated in a stronger form, **of one mind**, *thinking the one thing*." — *Vincent.*

Christian unity does not mean absolute sameness of opinion and thought, nor sameness of organization and forms. Christian unity is unity of spirit, of purpose, of principle, of love, of aim, of one kingdom, movement toward the same goal. It is the unity of an army, — with one leader, loyal to one cause, but with many departments, and companies, and organizations. It is the unity of nature, — with one law and principle, but with an infinite variety of forms. It is the unity of an anthem, — several parts, many notes, many voices, an infinite variety of sound waves; but in perfect harmony, under one leader, with one purpose. It is the unity of the body, — one soul, one person, one life; but with a great variety of parts. It is the unity of many states under one central government.

One of the most hopeful signs of our times is the growing tendency toward unity of the churches and denominations of Christians, a unity of love, not of authority, not of a pope, but of one purpose, — the salvation of all men and all nations. Note the tendency to federation; the working together of all denominations in mission fields; uniting in colleges and educational institutions. The Y. M. C. A. composed of all denominations that have the same purpose, and the wonderful success of such men as John R. Mott, and Sherwood Eddy in non-Christian lands; the young people's movement; the International Sunday School lessons; the use of hymns composed by Christians of all denominations, in all the hymn books; the union of all kinds of people for carrying out the purpose of Christ to overcome evils, and save men from sin and ruin.

Calvin says that "always in discords the door is open to Satan for spreading unholy teachings, for the repelling of which the chief defence is unity."

"In necessariis, unitas,
In dubiis, libertas,
In omnibus caritas."

"In necessary things, unity,
In doubtful things, liberty,
In all things charity."

"Many as the waves, but one as the sea."

III. **HOW TO OVERCOME THE DESTROYERS OF UNITY IN CHRIST**, vs. 3, 4. *First Destroyer.* **Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory.** Am. R. "Doing nothing through faction or through vain-glory." One of the greatest enemies of Christian unity, and of "the mind of Christ," is the party spirit, the spirit of contention. Not amicable discussion which is wise and helpful, but personal parties and divisions; "opposing good ends in a spirit of sheer wilfulness, making his chief business to object and find fault." — *Dr. Noble.*

Or vain-glory, "personal vanity" (*Lightfoot*), seeking for personal praise and esteem, wishing to be prominent, rather than for the good of Christ's cause.

Ruskin's Appeal in the last chapter of his *Modern Painters:* "So far as you desire

4. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

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to possess rather than to give ; so far as you look for power to command instead of to bless ; so far as your own prosperity seems to grow out of contest or rivalry of any kind, with other men or nations ; so long as the hope before you is for supremacy instead of love, and your desire to be greatest instead of least, first instead of last, so long are you serving the Lord of all that is last and least, the last enemy that shall be destroyed, death ; and you shall have death's crown, with the worm coiled in it, and death's wages, with the worm feeding on them. Kindred of the earth shall you yourself become ; saying to the grave, ' Thou art my father ' ; and to the worm, ' Thou art my mother and my sister.' "

The victory comes by a character exactly the opposite of the character of the Destroyer. **But in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.** Not seeking personal honor, but only the cause. Not a mock humility, like Uriah Heep's, nor ignorance of what one really is or can do, but the opposite of claiming attention, honor, and worship on account of it. It is the humility that makes one feel small in the presence of God, and the possibilities of life, the humility that does not seek great things for itself. Let others have the honors, and the high places. In every person there are some things to which others can look up.

A Pastor's experience. One of the first lessons I learned as a pastor was that if I would succeed I must let others have the honor, while I was the unseen power that was willing to do the work. It is not the figurehead on the bow, but the unseen screw beneath the water, that makes the steamship go. For all who desire to see the cause of Christ prosper, the advice, " In honor prefering one another," is the " open sesame " to success ; while one of the greatest dangers in the church is the seeking of honor for ourselves. That is the rock on which many a noble cause has been wrecked.

An Illustration. A young lady conscious of superiority refused to be entertaining to some company in a friend's house, saying, " I did not over exert myself ; I never like to waste my energies on people that are not worth while." The hostess raised her brows and smiled slowly.

" ' Once,' she said, ' I visited a woman who had a new rug by the door of the parlor. She was continually warning members of the family to go round the house and come in by the kitchen, or to keep their chairs off that rug. It had cost fifteen dollars, and was not worth that, for it was shoddy. She knew it would not stand wear.

" ' But once when we stopped in Persia to look at some rare Oriental rugs, that would be almost priceless in this country, I found the owners had thrown them down on the streets, so that casual passers-by might walk on them. For the more such rugs are worn the more valuable they become. Centuries of wear cannot destroy them.'

" The slow color mounted into Helen's face. ' I see the point,' she said. ' And I hope it was laziness rather than shoddiness that caused me to withhold my best from your friends.' " — *From the Youth's Companion.*

Second Destroyer, v. 4. **Look not every man on his own things.** Selfishness is the exact opposite of " the mind of Christ." A large part of the evils and dangers in our country flows from the selfishness which looks only on a man's own things, without any regard to the effect on others, — the employer who sees things from his own point of view, and neglects the effect upon those he employs ; the business man who refuses to see both sides of a bargain ; the politician who cares only for the effect upon his own career.

The victory comes from **every man also on the things of others.** " The apostle does not exhort men to cease to look to their own things, for he knows this would be impossible, but he would have them, as they look to their own, in the same degree to look to the things of others. Another form of the precept ' to love one's neighbour as oneself.' And by the word ' look ' he would make each of us a watchman, ever on the look-out lest in thought for himself, he is missing any occasion where he should equally think for his brethren."

IV. **THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST**, vs. 5–11. Paul calls the attention of the Philippians to what Jesus had done for them, of the same kind as that he urges them to do, — a perfect example of his teaching in the four previous verses, — **Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.** He then proceeds to picture how Jesus their glorified Messiah had exemplified this privilege and duty.

6. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;

7. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

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6. In the first place he was divine, as the apostle John states in the first verses of his Gospel.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him ; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

He was really God, **being**, Am. R. " existing," denoting continued existence, before and after his coming. " In Paul's thought, his Lord's career was one and undivided." **In the form of God.** The " form " denotes the appearance, look or likeness of some one, that by which those beholding him would judge him." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* **Thought it not robbery to be equal with God.** Am. R. " counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped," as " a prize," " a highly prized possession." " We understand Paul to say that Christ, being, before His incarnation, in the form of God, did not regard His divine equality as a prize which was to be grasped at and retained at all hazards, but on the contrary, laid aside the form of God, and took upon Himself the nature [the form] of man. . . . Christ's great object was to identify Himself with humanity ; not to appear to men as *divine* but as *human*." — *Professor Marvin R. Vincent.*

7. **But made himself of no reputation.** Am. R. " but emptied himself." Not of the nature of God, but of the " form " the " likeness or appearance by which those beholding him would judge him." Thus, while really divine, **he took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.** " In His humanity He retained the consciousness of deity, and in His incarnate state carried out the mind which animated Him before his incarnation. . . . What Christ grasped at in His incarnation was not divine sovereignty, but *service*." — *Professor Vincent.*

This agrees again with John's gospel. Placed side by side John and Paul interpret each other.

" He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

" He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

" And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." John 1 : 10, 11, 14.

8. " The apostle goes on to describe the depth of the self-renunciation." **Being found**, discovered to be, **in fashion as a man.** " No doubt there is here especially before Paul's mind the contrast between what Christ is in Himself, and what He *appeared* in the eyes of men." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

He was so completely a man that **He humbled himself**, " endured such great humiliation," that He even **became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,** the death of a malefactor.

Perhaps we can understand this description of Christ more clearly, if we recall the instances of a king leaving his palace, and all the insignia of a king, his royal array, his decorations and his magnificence, to go among his people, among the poor and sick to learn their needs, and give them aid, as was done at Messina after the earthquake. The king was just as *really* a king then, as when he sat upon his throne, but he did not have the form or appearance of a king, but the form and appearance of a common man, a helper, a doctor or nurse.

Recall the familiar story of Peter the Great of Russia, who in order to teach and uplift the Russian people, entered his army himself as a private soldier, worked for wages as a ship carpenter, lived among the workmen, himself the most strenuous of them all, in a small two-roomed hut. He learned personally nearly all that he wanted to know, — gunnery at Konigsberg, shipbuilding at Deptford, anatomy at Leyden, engraving at Amsterdam. — *From Encyc. Britannica, New Edition.*

In all this hard drudgery of work Peter was as really the Emperor of all the Rus-

9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

11. And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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sias, as when he sat on his throne in gorgeous robes, but he was not an emperor in form and appearance. He emptied himself, not of his real kingship, but of the form and fashion of a king.

The Glory of Christ; the Fruit of His Humiliation. We are told that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. But the Son freely offered himself to humiliation and death. It was his own choice, he was not compelled to do it. He so loved the world that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. And this was his glory. Homer tells us that Iphigenia the beautiful daughter of King Agamemnon was compelled to go to the altar to be a sacrifice to save Greece. It was no glory for her unless she offered herself to save Greece.

9. **Wherefore**, because he gave himself to save a world of sinners, **God also (hath) highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name**, the greatest name ever known or imagined. His name stands first in the annals of the universe, because no one else ever has so condescended and humbled himself from the throne of heaven to the lowly service of man. Jesus came into the world, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." He was always helping men, doing them good, making sacrifices for them beyond all others. The central figure of the world, the greatest man, the King of kings, achieved his headship by serving men more widely, more self-sacrificingly than any other being in the universe.

10. **That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.** Not at its mention, but in its presence, in its influence. **Of things in heaven.** All that is in heaven. Angels, glorified saints, cherubim, and seraphim, everything heavenly. Nothing exists in heaven but must look up to him. **And things in earth.** Not only men, but all forces and powers, commerce, art, invention, intellect, all shall be subservient to him and his cause. **And things under the earth.** The secret and yet hidden powers of nature. The greatest persons that ever lived and now are dead. The whole universe shall join in his honor.

"The world sits at the feet of Christ,
Unknowing, blind, and unconsoled.
It yet shall touch His garment's fold
And feel the heavenly alchemist
Transform its very dust to gold."

11. The time will come, is coming more rapidly to-day than at any time since the first centuries, when **every tongue** shall confess **that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Whatever Jesus did was not for himself. He did not wish to draw men away from God to his manhood, but by his manhood to draw men to the great God and Father of all. If Jesus were a mere man, or an angel even, then our love and worship of him would lead us away from God. But being God, the love of the man, Christ Jesus, is the way to the love and adoration of God. Thus is he the best example of true humility, which ever seeks God's glory and not its own. It is the supreme example of Love. It is the greatest accomplishment in history. None will begin to compare with it.

Such is the example of Christ for us to follow.

"Large is the life that flows for others' sakes,
Expends its best, its noblest effort makes.
Devotion rounds the man and makes him whole;
Love is the measure of the human soul."

—JAMES BUCKHAM.

"If thou wilt be a hero, and wilt strive
To help thy fellow and exalt thyself,
Thy feet, at last, shall stand on jasper floors;
Thy heart, at last, shall seem a thousand hearts —
Each single heart with myriad raptures filled —
While thou shalt sit with princes and with kings,
Rich in the jewel of a ransomed soul."

LESSON VIII. — February 20.

THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD AT JERUSALEM. — Acts 4:32–5:16.

TEMPERANCE LESSON.

PRINT 4:32-5:5. COMMIT vs. 34, 35.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Love one another from the heart fervently.* — 1 Pet. 1:22.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

At first thought this lesson will not seem especially adapted to be the basis for teaching temperance. But it can be made effective when we note that it consists of two pictures, — one of an almost ideal community where every fruit of the Spirit flourishes, the very atmosphere and climate of which is love, joy, peace and every virtue; the other is the picture of a man living within view of the other community, but who yields to temptation, and from small beginnings gradually becomes false at heart, and ends in destruction dragging down his family with him.

These two pictures represent the Ideal Temperance community and the effects of Intemperance.

LEARN BY HEART.

Acts 4:32; and 5:3, 4.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Somewhere between A.D. 30 and 34. No hint of the exact time is given.

Place. — Jerusalem, at the usual place of assembly for the Christian Community.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The picture of the Early Church.
How it compares with the first picture in chapter 2: 42–47.
In what sense did they hold all things common?
The character of Barnabas.
Ananias and his character.
What was his object in lying?
Is it ever right to tell a lie?
Application to Temperance.
Application to Intemperance.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Two Countries. — In which will you Choose to Live?

I. The Church Bountiful, 4:32–37.
II. The Community in which Ananias and Sapphira were Representative Members, 5:1–16.
III. Application to Temperance.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The *Commentaries* on Acts referred to in previous lessons.

Pierson's *Acts of the Holy Spirit* contains some remarkable facts like the judgment upon Ananias.

"Barnabas," in Hastings *Bib. Dic.*

Professor Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church.*

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Dante's *Paradiso.* Also in his *Inferno* he describes hypocrites in the eighth circle and fifth pit. George Eliot's *Romola*, the chapter on "Tito's Dilemma." Rogers in his bright *Greyson Letters* has chapters on "The Best Punishments of Hypocrisy," on Lying, and on compulsory virtue. William Secker in his *Nonesuch Professor*, on "Hypocrisy." Whately's *Annotations of Bacon's Essays* on Dissimulation." More's *Lalla Rookh*, "The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan." Bunyan's *Capture of Mansoul.* On *Temperance.* S. W. Hank's *The Crystal River turned upon the Black Valley Country* (Lothrop).

THE LESSON IN ART.

Death of Ananias, Raphael's Cartoons.*

32. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any *of them* that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

I. THE CHURCH BOUNTIFUL, 4:32–37. We have here another picture of the Apostolic church described in chapter 2. It is the same church after it had endured persecution. Opposition and suffering for the Cause of Christ only bound them together in a closer unity, intensified their love, developed more fully their eagerness to

33. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

34. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold.

35. And laid *them* down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

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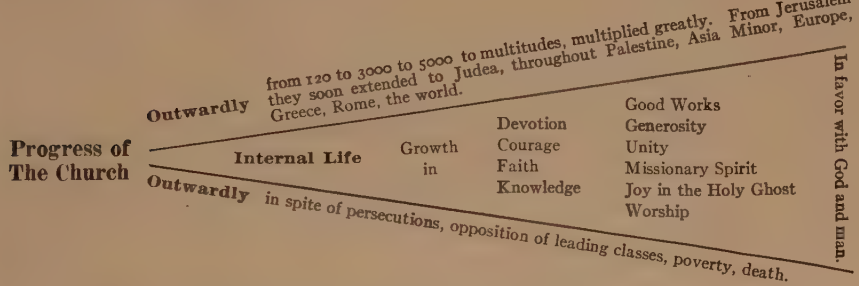
help those in need, increased the power of the Apostles to bear witness **to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus**, proving that he was the living Messiah. **And great grace was upon them all.** Grace is originally that which gives pleasure and delight, as loveliness of form (the Greek Graces) or character (the Christian Graces); hence, the favor of men, which brings expressions of good-will; but above all, the favor, the loving-kindness of God, which is the most perfect delight in the universe, bringing the favor of man, and the graces of character and life, virtues in their lovely aspect. They had grown outwardly as a community, increasing in numbers, in power, in influence, in steadfastness; while in the inner spiritual life there had been still greater progress.



34. **Neither was there any among them that lacked.** Some of them were the poor of Jerusalem; but for the most part they must have been the many Jews that had come from distant lands to celebrate the Feasts; and becoming Christians had remained to learn more fully the Gospel truths, and to be filled with the Gospel spirit, in order to carry the good news home with them to friends and neighbors. These having left at home their lands and business would have no means of supporting themselves in Jerusalem. Hence distribution of supplies to them was necessary.

Luke seems to love to dwell on the charming picture, a garden of Eden in a wilderness world; an oasis in the desert; an Elim with its palm trees and wells of water on the rough and arid way from Egypt to the Promised Land. We can easily see that a church of such a character would make rapid advances, and hasten on the day of the Lord's victory over the world.

34. **Possessors of lands or houses sold them.** For the need was greater than could be supplied by their income. This made the Jerusalem church poor, but it was a noble poverty. Human nature is ennobled by this example of generosity. If poor toward man, they were rich toward God, rich in Christian graces and usefulness.

35. **Laid them (down) at the apostles' feet.** As the ones best fitted, and most trusted to distribute the gift wisely.

No community of goods. "No universal selling of property is mentioned, and no general instructions were issued that members of the church ought to distribute to the poor all that they possessed. But many of the owners of property ('as many as were possessors of lands or houses'), of their own free will, from love of the brethren, used from time to time to sell their property and bring the proceeds to the apostles. They acquired merit and honor by these acts of self-sacrifice; and two examples are given, one honest and meritorious, one dishonest and disgraceful." — *Professor Ramsay.*

The Example of Barnabas, v. 36. **And Joses**, one form of the name Joseph. From his character and works he **was surnamed Barnabas**, = "son of consolation" (Am. R. "son of exhortation").

36. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, *and* of the country of Cyprus,

37. Having land, sold *it*, and brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

1. BUT a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

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Barnabas probably had a great gift at helpful, consoling, strengthening exhortation, as a fountain of the water of life, inspired by God. His power was less in doctrine and teaching, but more in spiritual uplift and inspiration. He was a comforter by his character, by his lovely and sympathetic spirit, by his personal ministrations, by his large gifts, as well as by his words of faith and courage and hope. He was **a Levite**, one of the priestly tribe of Levi, who had no inheritance as a tribe, but could possess property.

Of the country of Cyprus. This accounts for his having land which he could sell. In Cyprus were the famous copper mines which Augustus Cæsar leased to Herod the Great. His Jewish subjects naturally flocked thither. "According to Metaphrastes, an ancient Greek writer, Barnabas was born in Cyprus, of rich parents, who sent him to be trained at Jerusalem under Gamaliel. There he formed an early friendship with St. Paul."

37. **Having land** ("a field," Am. R.), **sold it**, to help support the poor. The proceeds were distributed by the Apostles instead of by each given as before, showing the beginnings of organization in the Christian Community.

The test and proof that Jesus was the Messiah is given in the words of Jesus (Matt. 11 : 5) —

"The blind receive their sight;
The lame walk;
The lepers are cleansed;
"The deaf hear;
The dead are raised up;
And the poor have good tidings preached unto them."

The test and proof that we are Jesus' Disciples lies in following his example and that of his early disciples as stated in Matt. 25.

"I was hungry and ye gave me to eat;
I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink;
I was a stranger, and ye took me in;
Naked, and ye clothed me;
I was sick, and ye visited me;
I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

"The Spirit of Christ in the hearts of men has done all this, and the church has supplied the bulk of the men and the money for its accomplishment. Let him who sneers at the social weakness of the church to-day glance at the long list of philanthropic and benevolent organizations which fill the Charity Organization Society and other Directories, carefully scrutinizing the names of the managers, and he will find the church at work in a scientific and collective manner, seeking through its inspired membership to minister to the poor and the needy. And no one is doing as much as the church in this direction." — *Charles Stelzle.*

"We all might do good where we often do ill;
There's always a way, if we have but the will:
For even a word, kindly breath'd or suppressed,
May guard off some pain, or give peace to some breast.

"We all might do good in a thousand small ways;
Forbearing to flatter, yet giving due praise:
In spurning ill rumor, reproving wrong done,
And treating but kindly the heart we have won.

"We all might do good, whether lowly or great —
A deed is not judged by the purse or estate;
If only a cup of cold water is giv'n,
Like the mite of the widow, 'tis something for heav'n." — *Whittier.*

"Not what we give, but what we share, —
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms, feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me."
— *Lowell.*

"The forest trees once asked the fruit trees, 'Why is the rustling of your leaves not heard in the distance?' The fruit trees replied, 'We can dispense with the rustling to manifest our presence; our fruits testify for us.'" — *The Talmud.*

II. **ANANIAS, THE JUDAS OF THE EARLY CHURCH**, 5 : 1–16. This account of Ananias and Sapphira records the second attempt to destroy the Church. The first attempt was by persecution from without; the second was by enemies within the fold.

But, in striking contrast with Barnabas, **a certain man named Ananias** = "to whom Jehovah has been gracious"; in Hebrew the name is Hananiah, the name of

2. And kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy *to it*, and brought a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

3. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land?

4. Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

5. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

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one of the companions of Daniel (Dan. 1:6), who was one of the three men who defied Nebuchadrezzar, and was cast into the fiery furnace (Dan. 3). **With Sapphira**, "beautiful," or "a sapphire," **his wife**. What they did was a deliberate plot, not a sin that came upon them with overwhelming force. **Sold a possession**, property of any kind; in this case it was landed property.

2. **And kept back**, in the sense of "appropriating for his own benefit," "withdrew covertly and appropriated to his own use." **His wife also being privy to it**. She knew what her husband was doing, and agreed to it. This was an aggravation of the crime, for it proved that it was deliberate. **And laid it at the Apostles' feet**, apparently at some public religious service where his gift was recognized, with the understanding that he had contributed the whole amount. Not long ago I attended the Feast of Tabernacles in a Jewish synagogue, and one part of the service was the calling, by the Rabbi, of a wealthy man to the platform and the announcing of his gift to the Jewish cause. In this case he did not come for show, but was summoned.

The motives of Ananias and Sapphira. "They desired to have all the credit the church would give them for acting as generously as Barnabas did, and yet, while getting credit for unselfish and unstinting liberality, to be able to enjoy in private somewhat of that which they were believed to have surrendered."—*Professor Stokes.* When every one else was vying with the others in gifts for the poor, it would be disreputable for this family to hold on to their possessions. It would be advertising their avarice. At the same time there were probably mingled with these motives some desire to help the poor and some admiration of the devotion and generosity of the others; at least enough of these to salve their consciences and to veil themselves in a measure from themselves. Only devils have no mixture of better motives with the bad.

3. **But Peter**, the natural leader, **said**, **Ananias**, **why hath Satan filled thine heart**. Not simply *why*, but "how is it that" (Am. R.), "seeming to emphasize the fact that Ananias had it in his power to have prevented such a result."—*Exp. Gk. Test.* Satan tempted him, and he yielded to the temptation. "Peter doubtless saw that the man was acting hypocritically, for the inner processes of the mind often manifest themselves in the face and bearing."—*Prof. G. H. Gilbert.* Quite possibly Peter had known something about Ananias' tendencies before this.

4. **Whiles it remained** in your possession **was it not thine own?** Even **after it was sold was it not in thine own power?** There was no compulsion to use it for the poor; you could give some of the price or all of it just as you chose, but you pretended to give all, you wanted the reputation for giving it all, when you gave only a part. **Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.** "The sin of Ananias was much more than mere hypocrisy, much more than fraud, pride or greed — hateful as these sins are — the power and presence of the Holy Spirit had been manifested in the Church, and Ananias had sinned not only against human brotherhood but against the divine light and leading which made the brotherhood possible."—*Exp. Gk. Test.*

Ananias' sin was a deadly blow against all that the Holy Spirit had done in founding the new community of Christians. It struck at the very life and hope of the world. Satan was trying to destroy the work of the Holy Spirit. The sin against man was nothing in comparison to the sin against God. It was unknown to man. It did not harm any man, except indirectly, because it was a sin against God. The injury was to his kingdom. It misrepresented God and his church. It tended to make others think that there was no real piety.

The Death of Ananias. 5. **And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost.** Note carefully that Peter did not kill Ananias. The Church did not kill him. His sudden death was doubtless as unexpected to Peter as it was to the

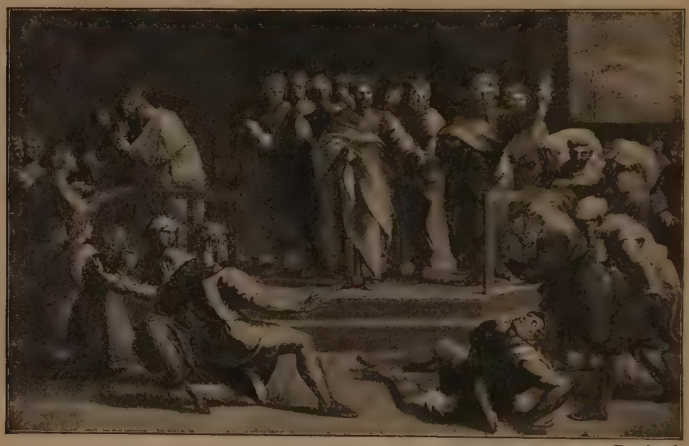
Christian community. It was a stroke of God, a judgment on the sin of Ananias. How much the sudden shock caused by the unexpected exposure of his hypocrisy had to do with it, God only knows. Doubtless his conscience had been troubling him.

In any case it was an act of God, a just and necessary punishment. If Peter, or the Church, or Jesus himself had done it, it would have misrepresented the Gospel, and the kingdom of heaven Jesus came to establish.

The story of Sapphira was similar to that of her husband.

The Effect. II. **And great fear came upon all the church**, the fear of doing wrong, the fear lest they might fall into sin, the fear of God's judgments on sin, the fear lest they might disgrace the religion they professed. This fear led to careful living, to heart searchings, to watching and prayer.

5. **Ananias gave up the ghost.** "Those who are familiar with the remarkable career of the Wesley brothers will recall more than one instance of supernatural visitations of judgment. For example, during Charles Wesley's revival meetings at St. Just, in Cornwall, England, a country squire, Eustick by name, drove a pack of



Raphael.

The Death of Ananias.

hounds among the congregation in order to break up the meeting and drive the attendants away — a mode of annoyance not infrequent in those days. On this occasion a number of the Lord's people withdrew and took refuge in a spacious kitchen. The prayer-meeting held there was of such extraordinary power as to surpass any other that those who were present had known. And as the service closed, Mr. Wesley, as if endowed with prophetic vision, arose and said, with an awful solemnity and deliberation, 'The man who has this day troubled you shall trouble you no more forever.' Shortly afterward Eustick passed to his last account in a state of raving madness." — *A. T. Pierson, D.D.*

1. A few counterfeit Christians do not prove that the gospel is a failure, or the church unworthy. A few dead trees in the forest, or dried stalks in the fields, do not prove that spring is a failure, or that the sun does not impart real life. It is never wise to judge of a garden by the weeds alone. Sahara has fewer weeds than the best farm in the world.

2. The sin of Ananias was a compound one,—lying, hypocrisy, avarice, ambition, pride, selfishness, sacrilege. No man is ever merely one kind of a sinner only. "A solitary sin is as rare as one 'measle.'"

3. The punishment of sin is necessary, both for making "the way of transgressors hard," in order that they may turn from that way, but also for a warning to others. Those sins always flourish which can be practised with impunity, or are lightly regarded by the community. The avenger of sin is often concealed within the form of the sin itself. The sin is like the wooden horse full of armed enemies, which the Trojans brought within their city walls.

Illustration. A man lately touched a "live" electric wire, and said that he now

had a respect for electricity, and the unseen powers that are everywhere around us in these simple looking wires, such as he never had before.

Note. It is only pity, not scorn, that we feel for the sinner. God and every good person wants to save him. So Jesus came not to condemn, but to save.

"Revile him not — the Tempter hath
A snare for all;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

"Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark
From hope and heaven!" — *Whittier.*

"I have wondered," says Dr. Jowett in one of his finely original sermons, "what might have happened if Simon Peter had exercised the skill of a surgeon, and with the gentleness which is the child of strength had dealt with his brother's sin and shame. What would have happened if Peter had taken him aside and related to him the story of his own falsehood and how he once shamelessly denied his Lord? . . . 'Between the Master's death and his resurrection I spent the awful day in hell. But the Master took me back again; he gave me a new chance to confess my love, and a new commission to prove it. He restored to me the joy of his salvation. And, Ananias, the same wonderful yet wounded love is waiting for thee!'" But we must remember, that Peter's sin was a sudden temptation, contrary to his new life, while Ananias' sin was deliberate hypocrisy.

4. Ananias must have come gradually to the depth of his hypocrisy.

Illustration. Senator Hoar in his *Autobiography* describes a sermon preached by Dr. James Walker, president of Harvard University, while he was a student there, which made a deep impression on the students. "He described with terrific effect the thinking over in imagination of scenes of vice by the youth who seemed to the world outside to fall suddenly from virtue. He said there was no such thing as a sudden fall from virtue. The scene had been enacted in thought, and the man had become rotten before the time of the outward act. 'If we could look into his heart we should find him at his accursed rehearsals again.'"

In the sermon of Dr. Jowett, referred to above, he refers to the gradual downward steps of Ananias. A mere suggestion; followed by meditation; then imagination, a picture in the chamber of imagery becoming an ideal, a purpose, a plan; enjoyment in the forbidden way; opportunity; then action.

5. Impress on your scholars the deadly nature of lying in all its forms. There are no "white lies." Never tell a lie, not even to yourself, by trying to deceive yourself as to your motives. Misrepresenting other people, reporting and dwelling on their faults, but keeping silent about their virtues, imputing unworthy motives to their actions, are really lies.

Truthfulness lies at the foundation of all good character. A great liar always begins with small lies, and finds in them his training for high degrees in the "Ananias Club," and the highest degree is hypocrisy which Christ denounced as among the deadliest of all sins.

"To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

"Friends, if we be honest with ourselves,
We shall be honest with each other."
— *George Macdonald* in *Marquis of Lossie, chap. 71.*

Dr. Cabot, among the chiefest physicians in this country, writes to the *Sunday School Times* that a lie is never right, not even to the sick or to the insane. "Almost every one — clergymen, social workers, college professors, and intimate friends included, — will lie to any one who is, *or is suspected of being*, insane. He is outside all the pales of morals. Does it work? Not at all. . . . The attempt to do it destroys the credit and confidence that makes it possible to deceive any one. Lying is sin because it is self-destruction."

III. **APPLICATION OF THIS LESSON TO TEMPERANCE.** (From Rev. S. W. Hanks' *Crystal River*, formerly called the *Black Valley Railroad.*)

The Christian community is represented by the *Land of the Crystal River.*

Ananias and his character and experience, by the Black Valley Country.

LAND OF THE CRYSTAL RIVER.

This is the land which all children enter when they come into this world. Cascades and waterfalls are numerous, so that the whole country can be irrigated and enriched by an abundant supply of the purest water. Living springs are found in every part of the land, forming multitudes of rivulets, which quietly flow into and form at last what is known as the great *Crystal*

THE BLACK VALLEY COUNTRY.

The Black Valley Country is situated in an extensive lowland, lying between an elevated and extremely fertile and beautiful region, called the *Land of the Crystal River*, bounding it upon its upper limits, and a vast and unexplored desert forming its lower boundary.

The Black Valley Railroad lies wholly within this country, and we can learn something of the character

River, which in time is to irrigate and transform the whole Black Valley Country.

In the vicinity of the streams and lakes of Fountain land, numerous flourishing villages and large cities have been built up. These places are all famous for the health, thrift, enterprise, and good character of their inhabitants. Wealth, too, abounds; and nearly all the people live in their own houses, in a state of comparative independence. The morals and good order are such that no police force is required for the protection of life and property. Prisons, almshouses, and lunatic asylums are almost unknown. The taxes levied upon the people are principally for the support of religious and educational institutions, the general improvement of the country, and for the aid and support of those ruined by travelling on the Black Valley Railroad. Churches, school-houses, colleges, libraries, and lecture halls are beautiful, and abound everywhere.

Of the country and its inhabitants from the names of some of the stations on the road; such as "Sippington," "Tippleton," "Topersville," "Drunkard's Curse," "Rowdyville," "Quarrelton," "Riotville," "Beggarstown," "Woeland," "Fightington," "Pitfall," "Robbers Den," "Prisonton," "Deliriumton, "Demonton," "Maniacville."

The upper portion, near the Crystal River, and in some degree under its influence, is beautiful and attractive. The clouds reflecting the light from many of its resorts are of roseate hues and rainbow colors, especially in the night; and thus many are attracted within its influence, and tempted to dwell within its borders.

But gradually the country becomes rougher, more barren, and stony. The inhabitants become poorer, and are infested with innumerable pains and diseases. Vice and crime abound. Innumerable drunkards and criminals are found there. Prisons and poor-houses take the place of churches and school-houses.

Temperance is only one of the virtues. A person may be a total abstainer, and yet have other vices. But the lesson of self-control is an aid to every other virtue, brings an atmosphere in which all good things flourish, is a training in all right living, and is like spring sunshine and showers upon the trees that bear the fruits of the spirit (Gal. 5 : 22, 23).

Intemperance, on the other hand, brings an atmosphere in which all the vices flourish. The want of self-control over this habit, weakens the will to resist temptation to yield to all the works of the flesh (Gal. 5 : 19–21).

The question for every one to decide is In which Country will you choose to live? In the Christian community — or in the company represented by Ananias and Sapphira? In the Land of the Crystal River or in the Country through which runs the Black Valley Railroad?

LESSON IX. — February 27.

THE SEVEN HELPERS. — Acts 6.

PRINT vs. 1–7. COMMIT vs. 2, 3.

GOLDEN TEXT. — ***Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*** — GAL. 6 : 2.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

"It is related of the late Dr. Weston of Crozer Theological Seminary, that he read the New Testament through once every month for fifty years, and his testimony is said to have been that every reading disclosed new truth."

It would be a very rich blessing if both teachers and scholars would read the book of Acts through several times during this year. To read and re-read such a book many times is a most excellent method of gaining a mastery of it. Dr. Dixon tells this story of Spurgeon. "While travelling in Scotland Dr. Spurgeon came across a very old and thumb-marked Bible. As he held it up to a window he could see the light coming through one little spot where a worm had eaten its way from cover to cover. It had begun at Genesis and finished at Revelation. As Dr. Spurgeon replaced the old Bible he said, 'Lord, make me a book-worm like that; it will never turn into an earthworm, and it will have wings by and by.'" Such a reading of Acts through and through, will give our spirits wings and visions.

Try this experiment on chapters 6 and 7. There will be especial gain if read aloud.

LEARN BY HEART.

Acts 5 : 11, 12, 14, 42.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — About A.D. 35. Ramsay places it earlier, A.D. 32, 33.

Place. — Jerusalem and vicinity. The apostles had not yet gone out through Judea.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The reason for so much emphasis on the poor and the sick, 5 : 12–16; 6 : 1.
How the persecution of the Apostles aided their cause.
Peter's second chance to preach to the rulers.
The cause of the murmurings among the Disciples.
How the difficulty was settled.
The work of the Deacons.
The work of the Ministers.
The great increase in the number of Christians.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Progress by Overcoming Difficulties, the Multiplied Church.

I. THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH IN VARIOUS WAYS, 5 : 12–42.
II. A NEW DIFFICULTY ARISES, v. 1.
III. THE DIFFICULTY REMEDIED BY A NEW ORGANIZATION, AND A DIVISION OF LABOR, vs. 2–4.
IV. THE SEVEN LAYMEN, vs. 5, 6.
V. THE MULTIPLIED CHURCH, v. 7.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Westminster New Testament — Acts. Lightfoot's *Horæ Hebraicæ* gives a full discussion of the distinction between Hebrew and Grecian Jews.

Peloubet's *Teacher's Commentary on Acts* (Oxford University). Luckock's *Footprints of the Apostles: St. Luke. The Early Church*, by the Durrell Bros. (Am. Tract. Soc.). Ramsay's *Pictures of the Early Church*, chs. VII and VIII.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

E. E. Hale's *Ten Times One is Ten.* Wilkinson's *Epic of Saul* finely depicts the character of Stephen and his power as a preacher (Funk & Wagnalls). Tennyson's *Two Voices* contains three stanzas referring to Stephen. *The Deacon's Week* by Rose Terry Cooke, is capital (Pilgrim Press).

THE LESSON IN ART.

St. Stephen, De Champaigne,* Millais, Francia; *Consecration of St. Stephen* and *Almsgiving*, Fra Angelico; *St. Stephen Preaching*, Fra Angelico.*

I. **THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH.** *During two or three years after the Last Lesson*, 5 : 12–42.

First. A Fresh Impulse of Revival both in helpfulness to the poor, and in the increasing numbers of converts. The people and the disciples gathered in Solomon's porch, where many signs and wonders were wrought by the Apostles, proving the divine power working through the apostles, and expressing the loving-kindness and helpfulness of Christ and his religion. Hearing of these cures a multitude came from the surrounding cities bringing their sick folks with them, and they were healed.

As a natural result multitudes of believers were added to the Lord, both men and women. But the others who had no faith or courage, did not dare to join them, lest they also suffer as hypocrites.

The House of Fulfilment (By Mabel Earle in *S. S. Times*).

"Once in my dream I heard a voice that rang
Through cloistered walks and portals fair to see,
Far-off, as though an unseen angel sang:
'Follow the call! thy King would speak to thee.'
[The call was through gates and up stair after stair.]

"My feet had trod the last round of the stair,
My hand had touched the last door's golden key;
Below I heard a cry of piteous prayer:
'Help, for Christ's love! return and succor me.'

"I heard, I wrung my hands; sadly I turned.
'Thus have I followed; shall I ever find?'
There was a niche where tall white tapers burned;
Before it one lay maimed, and halt, and blind.

"Even as I stooped to lift him from the stair
I heard soft harp-strings through the portal ring;
His hand touched mine; he stood beside me there,
Transfigured to mine eyes that knew the King.

"Then down the stairway streamed a flood of light,
And choiring voices chanted in accord:
'Glory to God, Eternal, Infinite!'
But I had clasped the feet of Christ my Lord."

Second. Persecution by the Jewish Authorities, most of whom were Sadducees. The Apostles were arrested and put in prison, but an angel, a "special messenger" of the Lord, opened the prison doors. Ramsay points out "the very simple character of Eastern prisons in modern times, and of the way in which prisoners are often allowed out by gaolers on parole," and thinks that the Lord may have sent some man or gaoler as his messenger to release the Apostles. Or it may be that a heavenly angel was sent for their release. "The angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him." (Ps. 34 : 7.)

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep."

Whoever brought them forth bade them in the name of the Lord to go to the Temple, and preach the words of life to the people.

Their escape was soon discovered, and the Apostles found busy preaching the Gospel. They were summoned without violence, and were set before the Sanhedrin Council. "Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

Third. The Apostles had another Opportunity to Preach to the Rulers. The summons before the Council was an excellent opening, and the Apostles took advantage of it. But the Council, all but one, were cut to the heart and took counsel to slay them.

The Picture in Wickliffe's Bible. There is a picture frontispiece in Wickliffe's Bible which was issued contrary to the commands of the church authorities. There is a fire burning and spreading rather rapidly, representing true Christianity. Around this spreading fire are congregated a number of significant individuals, all trying to devise methods whereby they can put the fire out. One with horns and tail represents Satan. Another is the pope with his red-coated cardinals, who forbade the promulgating of the Bible among the common people. Another represents infidelity. At length one suggests that they all make a united effort to blow on the fire till they blow it out. "The resolution is adopted, and there they are with swollen cheeks and extended lips, blowing upon the fire with all their might, but, instead of blowing it out, they are blowing it up, and they only blow themselves out of breath. The fire is inextinguishable."

Fourth. Gamaliel defends the Apostles. Gamaliel was a Pharisee and therefore opposed to the Sadducean party. He was "the last Rabbi who became famous at Jerusalem for wisdom and learning" (*Rendall*) and was best known to the Christians as the teacher of Paul. His argument is given in vs. 38, 39: "And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men; and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown: But if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God." (Am. R.) The council accepted Gamaliel's decision, and let them go, after they had commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and had emphasized their command by beating them.

"*The Result* was that "they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name," and they with greater enthusiasm "ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ," "daily, in the Temple, and in every house."

Spurgeon's Illustration. In Mr. Spurgeon's famous address, "Sermons in Candles," now published in book form (American Tract Society), is an illustration (p. 165) of a burning candle, on which he sprinkles steel filings. "This candle has fallen upon evil times. I have a bottle here full of black material which is to fall upon the flame of this candle. When I tell you that this bottle contains a quantity of steel filings, you will at once prophesy that the light will be put out. Let us see what will happen. Why, well, instead of putting the candle out, I am making it disport itself as candle never did before. Here we have fireworks, which, if they do not rival those of the Crystal Palace, have a splendor of their own. Do you not think that often when Satan tries to throw dust upon a Christian by slander, he only makes him shine the brighter? He was bright before; now he coruscates. . . . So may we turn the filings of steel into flashes of light."

The Tree that Faces the North. "In Spain, there is one of the grandest trees in the world. It is something like 50 feet in girth, and of great height, and the singular thing about the tree is that it will grow only on the northern aspect of the hills. It gains its grandeur by facing the north and fighting the battle with the tempest." — *Dr. Watkinson* in *London S. S. Chronicle.*

II. **A NEW DIFFICULTY ARISES WITHIN THE CHURCH**, 6 : 1. **In those days,** a general expression for the period of the rapid growth of the early church, **when the number of the disciples was multiplied** (Am. R. "was multiplying"), giving the reason why there would naturally arise some difficulty in distributing the food and other aid by the method which was all right when the numbers were few. **The disciples.** This word

1. AND in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

2. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them*, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

occurs here for the first time in the Acts. It pictures the kind of people the new Christian brotherhood were becoming. Disciples are learners, those who go to school to Christ, who accept of him as their teacher, receiving his doctrines, obeying his teachings, following his example, trusting to his guidance. Life is a school in which to be educated for eternal life, Jesus is the teacher, the Bible is the text-book, duties are the lessons to be learned.

There arose a murmuring. Gk. "secret displeasure, not openly avowed." — *Thayer's Greek Lexicon.* "Making a low or confused or indistinct sound." "A muttered complaint or protest; the expression of dissatisfaction in a low muttering voice; hence any expression of complaint." — *Century Dic.* There was no public protest.

Of the Grecians (Am. R. "the Grecian Jews") **against the Hebrews.** "A Hebrew, according to the description of the time, was a Jew born in Palestine who spoke the Hebrew tongue, or the dialect of it called Aramaic, and read the Scriptures in their original language, Hebrew. A Hellenist (Grecian Jew) was a Jew of the Dispersion or converted foreigner, who used, not the sacred language of the race, but Greek, and read his Bible in the Septuagint (*i.e.* Greek) version." — *Luckock.* "With some tincture of Greek sentiments and habits." — *New Century Bible.*

The Grecian Jews had come from other countries, and would have fewer acquaintances in Jerusalem, and have no means of supporting themselves during their unexpected delay in returning home.

Between these two classes there arose a complaint and murmuring because the widows of the foreign Jews did not receive their natural share of the support given to the home Jews. And yet they needed it even more than the widows who were among acquaintances and friends.

An Oriental widow, left without any legal protector, is in a very sad case of destitution. "For in the East any resources of remunerative occupation to a woman can be scarcely said to exist; and the comparatively secluded habits of life which custom exacts prevent her from pressing her claims and wants upon the attention of others with that vigor and effect which among ourselves a widow may properly do." — *Kitto.* It is quite probable that the Hebrews, who had charge of the distribution, may have been better acquainted with the needs of their own people, and thus have unintentionally given them more than their share of attention.

NOTE. This mistake, or partiality, of the first Christians has been far too greatly magnified. It was a very small and natural error, a very slight blot on the character of these noble Christians; a mere spot on the sun. And there is no greater mistake or injustice than to magnify the spots and forget the shining.

Some time ago there was an unusual number of spots on the sun, some of them so great that a world thirteen hundred times as large as ours could be thrown into them without touching the sides; and everybody was looking at them, and talking far more about them than about all the sunlight that was flooding the world with its glory. And a blind man hearing all this might easily imagine that the sun was chiefly made up of spots, and could do very little good with its shining.

"It is difficult to believe that the apostles, who shared with St. James of Jerusalem the belief that true religion consisted in visiting the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, could have acted in a spirit of partiality, so that the neglect, if it was due to them, could be attributed to anything else than to their ignorance of the greatness of the need."

III. **THE DIFFICULTY REMEDIED BY A NEW DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIZATION, AND A DIVISION OF LABOR**, vs. 2–4. *Calling a Church meeting.* **Then the twelve**, including the one elected in chapter one; or "twelve" is the old name by which the Apostles were called. **Called the multitude of the Disciples unto them**, to meet in some convenient place. "Another illustration of the democratic character of the early Church. The Apostles do not claim authority over the church." — *Westminster N. Test.* But they were the natural leaders, by their character, and experience, and training under Jesus.

It is no more necessary to suppose that the entire number of several thousands

3. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

attended the meeting than that all the church to-day attend every church meeting, or " that all the citizens attend every town meeting. It was a public gathering of the church, to which all could come who were so inclined. The open courtyard of any of the large houses of Jerusalem would afford a convenient place of meeting." — *Lyman Abbott.* **It is not reason** (" fit " Am. R.), proper, fitting under the circumstances, **that we should leave** (" forsake " Am. R.) **the word of God**, which was the work they could do better than any one else, while the work of distribution could be done by many others, perhaps even better fitted for it than the apostles themselves. It is not fitting that the captain or pilot should go into the hold and shovel coal; or for the general of an army to shoulder a gun.

Collecting and distributing money.

And serve tables. Both the tables at which money was collected and distributed, and the tables at which the poor sat, or from which food was distributed.

3. Look ye out . . . seven men. The church at large was to elect the men, but the apostles appointed them. The reasons for this action being taken by the church itself may have been, (1) because the matter being one pertaining to money, it may have been prudent for the apostles to avoid all suspicion; (2) it would enable them to avoid all taking sides in the controversy; (3) it would show more Christian spirit in the disciples to settle peacefully their own disagreements; (4) it would be more likely to be settled to the satisfaction of all if done among themselves; (5) it was a good training of the church; — it is far better to train others to do good deeds than to do any single act ourselves.

NOTE the three qualifications for seemingly secular service: (1) **of honest** (" good " Am. R.) **report**, so recognized by their character and actions ; (2) **full of the Holy Ghost** (" Spirit " Am. R.), deeply religious, and able to lead all they aided to a higher Christian life; (3) **and wisdom**, for there would be many cases that would require the utmost wisdom and skill to do the best for all.

As in all Christ's healings there was an uplift to a high spiritual life, so these laymen were to use the feeding of the hungry and the aiding of the poor as a means to bless the soul as well as the body.

The best laymen should be selected even for the secular affairs of the church. In doing this work faithfully, they would gain spiritual power for the higher service. Indeed all service, even the lowliest, may be done, and should be done, with the highest, noblest, most heavenly spirit that transfigures our daily lives. " Whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do," we may " do all to the glory of God."

"O Master, let me walk with Thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me Thy secret; help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

"Help me the slow of heart to move
By some clear winning word of love;
Teach me the wayward feet to stay,
And guide them in the homeward way.

"Teach me Thy patience; still with Thee,
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong.

"In hope that sends a shining ray
Far down the future's broadening way;
In peace that only Thou canst give,
With Thee, O Master, let me live!"

— *Rev. Washington Gladden.*

Helping our young people to serve. " Our greatest problem is here — to find suitable work for our young people to do. They are, as a rule, more anxious to lend a hand than to sit still and watch others. Activity is a part of youth.

4. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

6. Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid *their* hands on them.

"'The heart can only live in loving,
And by serving love will grow.'

"Our problem, then, is to discover and organise opportunities and means of expressional activities for the religious life of our young people.

"The capacity for spiritual service which our young people possess is not sufficiently recognized by the Churches. The spring is almost inexhaustible." — *London Sun. Schl. Chronicle.*

A story of Oberlin. When Dr. Finney was president of Oberlin a lady who had been but a few months in the city rose in one of the prayer meetings and found fault with the church. It was not as good as she expected. When she was through President Finney kindly asked her, "*My friend, what have you done to make Oberlin better since you came here?*"

The Minister's Duty. 4. **We will give ourselves** ("continue stedfastly" Am. R.) **continually to prayer**, the source of their power. It was public and private prayer; the conduct of the worship of the church. **And to the ministry of the word**, preaching and teaching the word of God, which they had learned of Jesus, and which was more and more revealed to them by the Spirit. So Timothy is commanded by Paul to give himself wholly to these things (1 Tim. 4 : 15). It is the business of the churches to so sustain their ministers that they can thus give themselves wholly to the ministry of the word.

IV. **THE SEVEN DEACONS**, vs. 5, 6. **And the saying pleased the whole multitude.** They selected the seven, and brought them before the Apostles who consecrated them to their work, by prayer, and laying their hands on them.

The laying on of hands "was the outward and visible sign of the bestowal of spiritual gifts," or of confirming the gifts already received, as is said of Stephen that he was **a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.** And "v. 8 undoubtedly justifies us in believing that an accession of power was granted after the laying on of hands; and now for the first time mention is made of Stephen's *wonders and miracles among the people.*" — *Expositor's Gk. Test.*

Of these seven we know almost nothing except of Stephen (our next lesson), and of Philip whose work is described in Acts 8. These two did a great deal more than *serve tables.* From the lower duty they rose to a higher. The names were all Greek, but it does not follow that all were Grecians, Hellenistic Jews, for "it was customary among the Jews to have two names, one Hebrew and the other Greek" (*Vincent*). But it was more customary among the foreign Jews, and probably some at least of the seven were Grecian Jews, and were doubtless chosen largely from the complaining party, to make them sure that no injustice had been or was intended. Here, too, a most excellent spirit was shown.

Suggestions. 1. We learn how to settle difficulties.

2. We learn how flexible the church organization should be, ready to be adapted to all circumstances and emergencies.

3. We have another example of the way God overrules times of trials and difficulty. The better organization of the church, the office of deacon, and an illustration of adapting our methods to our circumstances all grew out of this early difficulty.

V. **THE MULTIPLIED CHURCH**, v. 7. **And the word of God increased.** "Its power over the community increased." Its power extended to many more people, and to other classes, as the priests; the truths of salvation gained wider credence, and changed many hearts and lives. The generosity shown, the love of others expressed, the difficulty healed by a forbearing Christian spirit, was made known as widely as the discontent had spread. The beauty and power of religion was shown in a new light, as the silent, unseen current of electricity, when obstructed by the film, bursts out into a brilliant light.

The number of the disciples multiplied, not merely were "added," as in previous

7. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

statements, but grew more rapidly by multiplication. **In Jerusalem**, where there was the greatest opposition from the rulers, and where Christ was crucified, and all the facts concerning his resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit were best known. The progress is marked by the fact that **a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.** The constant attendance of the Christians at the Temple services, and the speeches of Peter in Solomon's Porch, had evidently impressed the priests and won many of them over to Christianity." — *Westminster N. T.* "May there not have been many among the priests waiting for the consolation of Israel, men righteous and devout." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

Obedient to the faith. "The meaning appears to be that these priests were now beginning to manifest their convictions as Christians, in spite of official frowns." — *New Century Bible.* "One of the qualifications in choosing the Seven had been that they should be full of the Spirit, and now the Church, through improvement in practical organization, took a new start in vigor of spiritual life." — *Ramsay.*

The Multiplied Church. There are two ways of multiplying a church. One is to multiply the numbers, on the principle of Ten Times One is Ten; the other way is to multiply the quality of the members, so that each one counts for much more. Ten times a thread makes a small cord, but ten times a rope woven of a thousand such strands is a vastly great power. Ten times a lump of charcoal is of small value, but ten times that same charcoal transformed into a diamond is of vast value.

The Multiplied Man. By becoming learners in the school of Christ each Christian grew in character, knowledge, skill in good works, the unfolding of his virtues and powers. Every additional gift or virtue or talent in a man is not merely so much added to him, but is a multiplier, for it increases the value of each and every other gift. A diamond increases in value not in arithmetical but in geometrical ratio. Add common sense to genius, and the man is multiplied many fold. Add to these consecration, zeal, grace, and love, and you multiply him many fold more. One note is a sound; add a score or two more and you have an anthem. One color, no matter how beautiful, is monotonous; add other colors and you have a cathedral window. A Christian multiplied by the Holy Spirit, by truth, by character, is like coal multiplied by man's skill into force, warmth, lights, electric cars; or iron multiplied by man into steam-engines, railroads, steamships, cannon, needles, watchsprings, and a thousand other things.

LESSON X. — March 5.

THE DEATH OF STEPHEN. — Acts 7:1–8:3.

PRINT 7:54–8:3. COMMIT 7:59, 60.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* — REV. 2:10.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Professor E. P. St. John of the Hartford School of Pedagogy, in an address on Boys, is reported as thus answering the question,

WHAT MAKES A BOY LOVE TO FIGHT?

"I believe that fighting, which is so very common at this period in a boy's life, is the evidence of a boy's admiration for courage. Most of the fights in which boys engage are not prompted by anger. . . . A group of boys, 13 to 15, were asked, 'What would you think of boys who would not fight?' Here are the answers. The first one said, 'He is a big coward.' The second, 'He ought to be licked.' The third, 'He is brave if he won't fight for glory, but a coward if he won't fight for insult.' The fourth and fifth said, 'He is no good.' Another said, 'Put him in a place where he would have to fight or get licked.' 'He can't fight if he has been told not to at home.' The teacher should help the boys to understand that gentlemen do not fight unless it is absolutely

necessary; that there are some battles of life that cannot be fought with fists, and that the boy who holds his temper is more manly than the one who goes in and wins. And I know that we shall find the boys respond to teaching of that kind."

Paul tells us how and what to fight, not only boys, but girls as well: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. 6 : 11, 12.)

Cause your scholars to see clearly the two great battles Stephen fought and the victories he won as described in to-day's lesson.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Not very long after the last lesson, and continuing perhaps a year into A.D. 36.

Place. — Jerusalem. The Hall of the Sanhedrin, and outside of the city wall. The Christians were then scattered abroad throughout Judea and Samaria.

LEARN BY HEART.

Eph. 6 : 11–16; Acts 6 : 15; 7 : 55, 56.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Stephen's life and character.
The sources of his power.
The foundation of the charges against him.
General view and purpose of Stephen's address.
Why were the Council so bitterly enraged?
The cause of the shining of his face.
The story of his martyrdom.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Stephen's Two Battles and Two Victories.

I. STEPHEN, THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.

II. STEPHEN'S FIRST BATTLE AND VICTORY CONCERNING THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS, 6 : 9, 10.

III. STEPHEN'S SECOND BATTLE AND VICTORY WITH THE ENEMIES OF JESUS, 6 : 11–8 : 3.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

A full and interesting account of Stephen and his address is given in Luckock's *Footprints of the Apostles*. Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church*.

And all the *Commentaries*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Bickersteth's *Yesterday, To-day and Forever*, on Modern Martyrs. Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures*, "Transcendentalism" and "Conscience," on the shining of Stephen's face; also Dante's Paradise, IX : 13–19. Luther before the Diet of Worms (Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*). Socrates and the Athenians (Plato's *Apology*, p. 23). Wilkinson's *Epic of Saul*. Keble's *Christian Year*, "St. Stephen's Day." Goethe's *Tale of Tales*, where a rough log-hut is transformed into an exquisite temple of silver.

THE LESSON IN ART.

St. Stephen before the Council, Fra Angelico.* *St. Stephen's Condemnation*, Fracassini. *St. Stephen's Martyrdom*, Angelico,* Lippi, Raphael, Titian.

I. **STEPHEN, THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.** Stephen means "a crown," and he lived up to his name, being the first of the Christians to receive the Crown of Martyrdom, like the twenty-four elders in Rev. 4 : 4, who had on their heads crowns of gold.

He was the first named of the seven "deacons" who were chosen to minister to the poor in the church, and was the most distinguished of them all.

His career shows him to have been a man of remarkable talent and skill.

He was a Hellenist, a Grecianized Jew, broader-minded, with larger experience of men and affairs, than most Jews who had lived only in Palestine. Naturally his great work was in the synagogues of the foreign Jews, who were abundant in Jerusalem as their assembling places for Sabbath instruction and daily schools for their children indicate; just as in every great city here we find French and German and Swedish and other national churches and Jewish synagogues.

"Both Stephen and Philip are said to have been amongst the seventy" disciples whom Jesus sent forth in his later ministry to go before him into every city and place whither he himself would come (Luke 10 : 1). In any case he had seen and heard Jesus, for in his death vision he recognized Jesus glorified.

Character Sketch of Stephen. 1. "A young man of such original genius and special grace that there was nothing he might not have attained to had he been allowed

to live. His wonderful openness of mind; his perfect freedom from all the prepossessions, prejudices, and superstitions of his day; his courage, his eloquence, his spotless character; with a certain sweet, and at the same time majestic manner, all combined to set Stephen in the very front rank both of service and of risk. He was already all but the foremost man of his day." — *Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters.*

2. He was a man of power, the power of faith and character aflame with the Holy Spirit. His eloquence was "logic on fire."

3. He was full of grace, and of graces, and the beauty of holiness. Grace and *power* do not always go together. Some things are beautiful, but not strong. Some things are strong and not beautiful. "How seldom is a Boanerges (son of thunder) at the same time a Barnabas (a son of consolation). But the highest characters combine both. 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their *strength* . . . and the *beauty of the Lord* God shall be upon them.'" — *Pres. Mark Hopkins*, in *Strength and Beauty.*

4. The source of his power was that he was filled with the Holy Spirit (v. 5). "Professor Bruce said of Phillips Brooks, 'The man is just a great water-main attached to the everlasting reservoir of God's truth and grace and love, and streams of life, as by a heavenly gravitation, pour through him to refresh weary souls.'" — *Prof. A. V. G. Allen's Life of Phillips Brooks.*

5. He was a man of deeds. **He did.** Imperfect tense, "was doing"; he kept on doing. He was a man of action as well as preaching. He practised what he preached. "Battles are not won by lectures on gunpowder." **Great wonders.** Proving the power of God that worked in and through him. **And miracles.** Greek, "signs," miracles that were a sign of God's presence and indorsement, and object-lessons of the loving, saving spirit of the Gospel (6 : 8).

6. The story of Stephen shows him as one filled with intense earnestness to save men into the Kingdom of God.

General Booth. "What do I want my life for?" continued General Booth. "I want to spend my days in doing a little more at self-improvement, for I cannot regard myself as a finished article. I want to do more for humanity, and I want to do a great deal more for Jesus Christ." — *London S. S. Chronicle.*

II. **STEPHEN'S FIRST BATTLE AND VICTORY**, 6 : 9, 10, **CONCERNING THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS.** Stephen's earnestness, boldness and power in preaching Jesus as the Messiah, and in doing mighty works in Jesus' name, awakened great enthusiasm in Jerusalem and many converts were added to the Christian community. He had a vision of what Jesus as their Messiah would accomplish, and the changes he would make, that aroused intense antagonism, even in Grecian Jews. Stephen as one of these evidently went into their synagogues of one of which he was doubtless a member, and preached Jesus to them with passionate enthusiasm.

6 : 9. Then there arose. The opposition had been sleeping; now it was awakened and stood up against the Christian movement in a hostile attitude. In Jerusalem were many synagogues (nearly equivalent to churches with schools for the children, the Bible being the chief textbook). The Talmud says there were 460 or 480 synagogues in the city. A certain number of these belonged to Hellenist Jews from the foreign countries into which they had gone for business reasons. Some of these had returned to Jerusalem to live, and others came there to visit during the great Feasts.

Synagogue of the Libertines. *The Libertines* "were probably Roman 'freedmen,' ἀπελεύθεροι, who were formerly captive Jews brought to Rome by Pompey (B.C. 63), and afterwards liberated by their Roman masters. These men and their descendants would enjoy the rights of Roman citizenship, and some of them appear to have returned to Jerusalem." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* So in our large cities we often have churches of foreign-born people.

Cyrenians. Cyrene was a great city of the province of Cyrenaica, in North Africa. Josephus relates that one fourth of its inhabitants were Jews. **Alexandrians.** From Alexandria, on the Mediterranean, twelve miles from the mouth of the Nile, a famous philosophical and literary centre. The famous teacher Philo, who lived here (B.C. 20–A.D. 50), says that two of its five districts formed the Jewish quarter. **Cilicia.** A province of Asia Minor, of which Tarsus was the capital. Paul is supposed to have belonged to this synagogue. **Asia.** Not the grand division, but the Roman province in Asia Minor.

"It is not certain how many synagogues are referred to in this verse, whether one, two, three, or five; but as the Greek does not decide this question, the last supposition is to be regarded as the most probable on the grounds that the cities and regions here

mentioned were widely separated, containing large numbers of Jews, and had each its own type of civilization." — *Bible for Home and School.*

Disputing with Stephen. Either in public debate, or discussion in the synagogues. Free and fair discussion is the way to the truth. But free discussion of any kind is better than forced repression, which tends to produce a dangerous explosion. Free discussion is a safety valve. Woe to him who sits upon it. It is like the crater of Vesuvius, ever smoking and blazing but usually with little harm. Confine its fires, and you have an earthquake and destruction.

The Scene. Professor Wilkinson, in his *Epic of Saul*, sets forth this scene most vividly. He represents Saul as wanting to debate with this young genius as "a foeman worthy of his steel." Saul makes the first address, ending with an eloquent peroration against the blasphemy of thinking that a Galilean carpenter, a crucified felon, could represent "the dazzling splendors of Messiahship." His argument seemed without a flaw.

"Be sure that when *He* comes,
His high degree
Will shine illustrious, like the sun in heaven,
Not feebly flicker, for your fishermen
From Galilee to point it out to you,
With their illiterate 'Lo, here! lo, there!'"

To accept Christ seemed to abolish Moses, destroy the great traditions of the fathers, to erase their past history, to blot out all their glorious hopes.

But Stephen answers from their own Scriptures, much as is recorded in the next chapter.

"In guise a seraph rapt, with love aflame
And all aflame with knowledge, like the bush
That burned with God in Horeb unconsumed,
The fervent, pure apostle Stephen stood
In ardors from celestial altars caught,
Kindling to incandescence, — stood and forged
With ringing blow on blow, his argument
A vivid weapon edged and tempered so,
And in those hands so wielded, that its stroke
No mortal might abide, and bide upright."

Stephen's battles were for the truth of God and of Jesus Christ; for the great essentials of Salvation; a battle for all generations that were to follow.

The Victory. **They were not able to withstand the wisdom** which God had wrought in him, **and the Spirit by which he spake.** Compare the promise in Luke 21 : 15, fulfilled in Stephen, — "I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand." Stephen has part in the triumphs of Christianity through the ages. His example is a star which never ceases to shine. He holds up before all men an ideal of heroism, courage, faithfulness to duty. He is a perpetual inspiration.

"God has His best things for the few
Who dare to stand the test:
God has His second choice for those
Who will not have the best.

"There's scarcely one but vaguely wants
In some way to be blessed;
It is not blessing, Lord, I seek;
I want Thy very best.

"I want amid the victor throng
To have my name confessed,
And hear my Saviour say at last,
'Well done! you took the best.'

"Give me, my Lord, Thy highest choice,
Though others take the rest:
Their good things have no charm for me,
Since I have found Thy best."

"Awake, my soul! and for the strife
Of onward, upward Christian life,
In earnest faith prepare;
Where the fight rages fierce and high,
Goes forth the Church's chivalry,
And thou, too, must be there.

"Then up, my soul! and onward press
To Him, who in the wilderness
There waits and fights for thee;
Thy love to Him devoutly prove
By deeds, not words, and let His love
Thy shield and buckler be."
— *Thomas B. Leigh*, head of the largest Sunday School in the world; Stockport, Eng.

III. **STEPHEN'S SECOND BATTLE AND VICTORY**, 6 : 11–7 : 3, **WITH THE ENEMIES OF JESUS.** Stephen had succeeded so well in putting to rout the men of the foreign synagogues that the Jewish authorities determined to take hold of the problem themselves, and put a stop to this Christian teaching.

Then they suborned men, that is they employed a secret agent, and secretly instructed them what charges to make against Stephen. They bribed them to perjure themselves by giving false witness. The general tenor of this false witness was made known, and talked about, the witnesses declaring that they had heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God. Thus the elders and Scribes stirred up the people. Hitherto the opposition was confined chiefly to the rulers whose interests were most affected by the progress of the gospel. Now the leaders had

got hold of something which touched the religion and the hopes of the people; and especially when the strictness and the generosity of the Christians troubled the consciences of those who did not wish to act in like manner. Stephen was arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin, the highest court of the Jews.

The False Witness. The false witnesses declared that they had heard Stephen speak Blasphemy — which was punishable by death —

(1) Against Moses.
(2) Against God.
(3) Against the Temple.
(4) Against the Divine Laws and customs.
(5) That Jesus would destroy the Sacred Temple.
(6) That he would change the customs instituted by Moses.

The sum of the accusation was that Stephen was a traitor to the Nation and to God.

" The expression ' false witnesses ' does not imply that they invented words which Stephen had not used, but that they took his isolated sayings apart from their context, and thus put into them an unjustified innuendo. It was easy to distort his teaching about the incompleteness of the Hebrew Law into blasphemy against Moses and against God; and this was the evidence." — *Ramsay.*

Distorting Mirrors. In one room of the Palace of Light at the great Exposition at Paris, there was a long row of peculiar mirrors, in which you saw yourself in every odd, peculiar, distorted fashion, except your one natural image. So these people saw the statements of Stephen changed and distorted by their prejudices and preconceived views.

Half Truths are sometimes the worst misrepresentation of the real Truth.

The Scene. In the hall of the Sanhedrin adjoining the Temple the seventy judges, leading people of the Nation, sat in a semicircle. Stephen brought in by the officers, is standing before them on trial for his life, and for the Cause he had at heart. Near by are the witnesses whom these judges had suborned, and who have given their testimony, a distorted statement of the facts.

The Council looked at Stephen, fastening their eyes on him, for instead of any sign of fear or dread **they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel**, with the divine illumination of the Holy Spirit, as Moses' face, when he had been forty days on the Mount alone with God, shone so that the people were afraid to come nigh him; with a hint of Jesus' transfiguration glory.

It was what Joseph Cook called the solar look, from " the sun behind the sun." " Other things being equal, Cesar's eye goes down whenever it meets and does not possess the solar look. The veriest sick girl, with this solar light behind her eyeballs, is more than a match for Cesar without it. This radiance cannot be counterfeited, it must have an adequate cause." — *Monday Lectures, Conscience.*

Dante, describing the angels whom he met in the Paradise, impresses us at once with their external glory and spiritual effulgence. Invariably he makes the former the result of the latter. With closer faithfulness to physical science than he dreamed, he sings:

"Another of those splendors
Approached me, and its will to pleasure me
It signified by brightening outwardly,
As one delighted to do good;
Became a thing transplendent in my sight
As a prize ruby smitten by the sun."

This was God's answer to the charge against Stephen. " As if in refutation of the charge made against him, Stephen receives the same mark of divine favor which had been granted to Moses. It is said of the aged Polycarp, as he faced a martyr's death, that he caught in his closing hours some rays of the glory of the transfiguration." *Exp. Gk. Test.* " Brightness, calmness, benignity, fearlessness, a look high and far, — such, Dr. Raleigh supposes, must have been at least some of the elements of this ' angel face on man.' And then he goes on to suggest how even we, now and here, may have at least a little of its radiance." — *Wayland Hoyt.*

"The light that lifted and transfigured him
And glorified, that bright auroral ray
Of genius which forever makes the brow
It strikes on from its fountain far in God,
Shine like the sunrise-smitten mountain peak."
— *Professor Wilkinson.*

"When one that holds communion with the skies,
Has filled his urn where those pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings;
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied."
— *Cowper.*

In the midst of this silence as the judges are gazing upon the strange scene, the voice of the high priest is heard,

Are these things so?

STEPHEN'S DEFENCE was a straightforward positive denial of all the charges. He does this by recounting their history as a story which he believes and accepts. He knows it by heart. He is true to the faith. He is not disloyal. He is not a traitor. He emphasizes those details which answer the false witness against him.

At the same time he shows that the rulers and judges who were condemning him were themselves guilty of doing the very things which their fathers had done to Moses and the prophets, for which God had punished and condemned them.

THE STORY OF ABRAHAM the father of the nation, Stephen told, — his call to Palestine, the promises, the covenant of circumcision, the experiences of Joseph, and God's goodness (7 : 2–16) was patriotic, not traitorous.

THE STORY OF MOSES, vs. 17–43, tells of God's wonderful deliverances of his people, the greatest of all being the promised Prophet which God would raise up like Moses, and whom ye should obey, for from him was to come the living Oracles, like those received by Moses on Sinai. But our fathers would not obey Moses, but thrust him from them, just as you have refused to obey, and have thrust from you the Prophet foretold by Moses. For this our fathers were carried captive to Babylon. (The rulers well understood that Stephen referred to Jesus, and their refusal to believe Him, and their crucifying Him. He left the application to their own consciences.)

THE TABERNACLE AND THE TEMPLE, vs. 44–50. Here Stephen begins his refutation of the charge of blasphemy against the Temple. Their fathers had built in the

"Martyrdom of St. Stephen," Fra Angelico.
Fresco in Chapel of Nicolo V, Vatican, Rome.

wilderness, the Tabernacle of witness to God's presence and covenant with his people, according to God's own pattern. This continued till Solomon built the nobler Temple after God's own plan.

Then he goes on to apply these facts, showing just what he had taught:

"Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet,

"Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?

"Hath not my hand made all these things?"

The argument is, that the destruction of the tabernacle, in order to make way for the more fitting and glorious temple, implied no blasphemy against God; and therefore the announcement that the temple should be destroyed, and that its place should be taken by a still more glorious spiritual temple, was not blasphemy against God, nor a denial that the temple and its worship were ordained of God.

STEPHEN SUDDENLY APPLIES THE SCRIPTURES TO HIS JUDGES, vs. 51–53. At verse 51 there is a sudden and abrupt change. There is every reason to believe that at Stephen's references to the Temple, he perceived a restless excitement, a murmuring of rage in his audience, the signs of an approaching storm; and he hastened to make a personal application of the Scriptures to those before him. It was a fitting climax; a passionate appeal to the heart and conscience, in a last, loving, almost "forlorn hope,"

54. When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with *their* teeth.

55. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

56. And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

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that the rulers might repent and save themselves and the nation. It reminds us of the "woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites" which Jesus uttered (Matt. 23) when on the last day of his public teaching he had used every possible influence to persuade them to repent and save themselves and their nation. All had been in vain. Only one thing remained, — to take away the mists that blinded their eyes, and show them the divine woes which were always flashing like lightning strokes against such characters as theirs. It was "the wrath of the Lamb." It was not hate, but the intensity of Love, to save them, to crash through their bitter prejudices, and to cause them to see the yawning gulf before them. And he ended his work for them with tears of pity and an almost broken heart of love, as he said,

"**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!**"

So it was with Stephen. We must not think of him as in a passion of anger or hate, but with the same spirit which made him say as the stones fell upon him, **Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.**

We think of Stephen as speaking in the tones of Dr. Chalmers when an unbeliever said that Christ could not be as good as was claimed, or he would never have spoken such harsh words as he did to the Scribes and Pharisees. Dr. Chalmers asked him to point out the words. And then the Doctor read them so tenderly, with such infinite pathos and love, that the unbeliever acknowledged that the good Jesus might have so uttered them.

From a photograph.

St. Stephen's Gate, Jerusalem.

In the east wall north of the temple area; leading down through the Kidron valley, Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives.

Read carefully verses 51–53, in order to see how Stephen applied his story of the Scriptures to his audience.

THE STONING OF STEPHEN, vs. 54–60. **They were cut to the heart.** The Greek is a composite of two words, "sawn" and "through." They were "sawn asunder" in their hearts, "torn with rage," "exasperated." But amid their stormy rage, Stephen looked beyond the earthly scene, **being filled with the Holy Spirit**, and, looking **up stedfastly into heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God**, as if waiting to help him and welcome him, and saying, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord." He *knew now* as he had believed before, that Jesus was alive. Oblivious to the tumultuous scene around him, the council hall, and the circle of his infuriated judges all faded from his vision, and he cried out (v. 56): **Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God,** — the Messiah they had crucified and slain.

57. Enraged at this seeming blasphemy, the Sanhedrin **cried out with a loud voice** in order to drown with their clamor such, to them, impious words. So "the drums were beaten to drown the last words of the Scottish covenanters." It was practically an informal vote, as was the rising vote when they **ran** ("rushed," Am. R.)

58. And cast *him* out of the city, and stoned *him:* and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

59. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

8:1. AND Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem: and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

2. And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation over him.

3. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed *them* to prison.

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upon him with one accord. They **cast him out of the city,** for no execution was allowed within the walls, "as was the case in London till about a century ago; the condemned being conveyed from Newgate to Tyburn, a distance of nearly three miles, for execution." **And stoned him,** while he was **calling upon God** ("the Lord," Am. R.) in the double prayer, —

Lord Jesus, receive my spirit:
and
Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.

And when he had said this, he fell asleep. So calmly did he lay down his life. Sleep implies an awakening. This was not the end of Stephen. His body, as one asleep, was unconscious of earthly ills, but his spirit was welcomed into the joy of his Lord. Our word *cemetery* means *sleeping-place*, the very name expressing the assurance of the resurrection.

The Catacombs of Rome. Miles of underground winding passages were used as burial places for both heathen and Christians. They were used also as hiding places in times of persecution, and for gatherings of Christians for religious worship. Over the dead were placed symbols, emblems, and inscriptions. Many of these have been taken from the Catacombs and placed upon the walls of a gallery in the Vatican called the Lapidarian.

On one side of the gallery are placed the Christian inscriptions and emblems for their dead, and on the other side directly opposite are the inscriptions for the heathen dead.

A Dove winging toward Heaven with a Laurel Branch for Victory; and the word Peace.

(A Christian Resurrection symbol from the Catacombs.)

—— The Contrast is full of instruction ——

The heathen inscriptions and symbols tell of lofty titles and the pride and pomp of life; but there is not one expression of hope of life beyond the grave, not a ray of light on the future.

On the other hand, the Christian inscriptions and emblems have no reference to earthly troubles or pains, to martyr's flames or to death. All look beyond to "the starry portals of heaven." They are emblems of victory, of hope, of peace, of sleep from which there is to be an awaking, of love and light and crowns of eternal life. See *the Helps in Holman's Bibles.*

Emblems of Christ; a Crown and Palms of Victory over Death.
(From the Catacombs near Rome.)

8:1–3. **And at that time there was a persecution.** Am. R. "And there arose on that day a persecution."

3. **As for Saul he made havoc of the church.** Am. R. "But Saul laid waste the church." **Haling,** Am. R. "dragging."

Stephen's Victory. 1. Stephen was a success in his personal life. He was victorious over temptations, self-interest, obstacles, difficulties, dangers. By overcoming these he developed his character and manhood, he grew larger, higher, nobler. He became a hero who lives down the ages. He was gold tried in the fire. No man's life is a failure who is himself a moral success, and is a victor on the battlefield of the heart. "Shakespeare," says Dowden, "beats triumphal marches, not for successful persons alone, but also for the conquered and the slain."

2. He was one means of the conversion of Paul, who did for Christianity what Stephen with all his eloquence could not have done. Saul standing by and deeply impressed by the scene, and not long afterward changed into a disciple of Jesus, shows how the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church, and reminds us of the monument to Charles and John Wesley in Westminster Abbey. It is a marble tablet containing the medallion portraits of the two Wesleys combined together, and underneath is the inscription:

"God buries the worker, but carries on the work."

3. He has been a part of the triumphs of Christianity for almost two thousand years, an example and inspiration over the world.

Wickliffe and his Doctrine. In obedience to the order of the Council of Constance (1415), the remains of Wickliffe were exhumed and burnt to ashes, and these cast into the Swift, a neighboring brook running hard by, and "thus this brook hath conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wickliffe are the emblem of his doctrine which is now dispersed all the world over." — *Fuller's Church History.* "For though they digged up his body, burnt his bones, and drowned his ashes, yet the Word of God and truth of his doctrine, with the fruit and success thereof, they could not burn." — *Fox's Book of Martyrs.*

"The Avon to the Severn runs,
The Severn to the sea:
And Wickliffe's dust shall spread abroad,
Wide as the waters be."

4. In heaven he wears the victor's crown, and dwells forever in the joy of his Lord, eating of "the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God," "a pillar in the temple of my God," having "the morning star" and "the new name."

"And when these earthly years are past and gone,
Temptation's battle fought, the victory won,
From heaven shall gently come this message down,
They that have borne the cross, shall wear a crown
Never to fade."

A soldier said, "When I die do not sound taps over my grave, but reveillé, the morning call, the summons to rise."

LESSON XI. — March 12.

HEROES AND MARTYRS OF FAITH. — Hebrews 11:1–12:2.

PRINT 11:1, 32–12:2. COMMIT 12:1, 2.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith.* — Heb. 12:1, 2.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

What is the faith which produced so many heroes and martyrs?
Abel being dead yet speaketh.
How Enoch walked with God.
How Noah showed his faith.
The heroism of Abraham.
How did faith enable the persons mentioned in vs. 32–38 to be heroes and martyrs?
Who were the cloud of witnesses?
What weights were to be laid aside?
The sin that doth so easily beset us.
Jesus the great example.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The best commentary on Ephesians is the *Expositor's Greek Testament,* vol. 4. While there are Greek, German and Latin comments, there are many wise things said in English.

Westcott's *Epistle to the Hebrews* has the Greek text. Commentaries by Delitzsch Stuart, Meyer, A. B. Davidson, *Expositor's Bible, Cambridge Bible, New Century Bible, Bible for Home and School.*

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

There are two spheres of Heroism for which Medals of honor are awarded, both in this country and in England. The *Victoria Cross* England bestows on those who have done heroic deeds in war. To

(Valor in War.)

Congressional Medal of Honor.

"The medal is suspended by a blue silk ribbon, spangled with thirteen white stars representing the original States, and this ribbon is attached to an eagle supported upon a horizontal bar. Upon the bar, which is attached to two points of the star, appears the word 'Valor,' indicative of the distinguished service represented by the medal.

"The reverse side of the medal is engraved with the name of the person honored and the place and date of the distinguished service for which awarded." — *Official Description sent by the War Department.*

this she has added the *Albert Medal* for heroic deeds of Peace in the daily life.

In this country the President, in the name of Congress, confers a *Medal of Honor* for "most distinguished service, or extraordinary heroism in war." In 1904 Mr. Carnegie set aside $5,000,000 for a Hero Fund in Peace, which bestows *bronze and silver medals* and *pecuniary recognitions* on those in peaceful vocations who do heroic deeds in attempting to preserve or rescue human life. It is interesting to know that the first Medal bestowed by the Hero Commission was given to a boy for rescuing another boy who was drowning.

To-day we are studying heroes and the heroism of God's servants who dared everything to save their fellow men; upon whom God bestowed heavenly instead of earthly rewards, and whom he

(Valor in Peace.)

Carnegie Hero Medal.

gave the privilege of helping men all down the ages to be better, truer, nobler, more useful.

LEARN BY HEART.

Heb. 11 : 1, 10; 12 : 1, 2.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Faith that Makes Heroes in Daily Life.

I. THE FAITH THAT ACCOMPLISHES THIS, VS. 1–3.
II. ILLUSTRATIONS AND EXAMPLES OF THE POWER OF FAITH, VS. 4–40.
III. WHAT THIS FAITH IS DOING IN MODERN TIMES.
IV. AIDS TO FAITH AND ITS VICTORIES, 12 : 1, 2.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Book. — Epistle to the Hebrews.
Author. — Unknown.
Date. — Probably A.D. 65–68.
Place. — In Italy outside of Rome.
Connection with the Last Lesson. — Stephen was one of the heroes of faith, like those described in this lesson.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship. Hero Tales* by Grace T. Davis (Mrs. Ozora Davis) (Pilgrim Press). *Book of Golden Deeds* of all Times and all Lands, by the author of the "Heir of Redclyffe"

(Lothrop, Boston). *Heroes and Heroines of the Cross* by Rev. Dr. Rohde. *The Courage of the Commonplace* by Mary R. S. Andrews (Scribners), a story of life in college and beyond. *Fox's Book of Martyrs.* All the long list of books on missions and missionaries, crammed full of Faith and Heroism, "*Tales of Christian Heroism.*" *Fifty Missionary Heroes* by Julia H. Johnson. (Revell.)

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

I. **THE FAITH THAT MAKES HEROES IN DAILY LIFE**, vs. 1–3. "That the Hebrews may still further be encouraged to persevere in maintaining Faith the writer exhibits in detail its victories in the past history of their people, and especially in the life of Jesus." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* **Now faith is the substance** (Am. R. "assurance") **of things hoped for, the evidence** (Am. R. "a conviction") **of things not seen.** "These words are not a definition of what faith *is*, but of what it *does*." The word *substance* in the A. V. means literally "foundation, the ground on which one builds a hope." Wescott defines the word as "essence, that in virtue of which a thing is."

Evidence (A. V.) "regularly means 'proof.' It seems never to be used in a subjective sense for 'conviction' or 'persuasion.' *Faith is that which enables us to treat as real the things that are unseen.* Substantially the words mean that Faith gives to things future, which as yet are only hoped for, all the reality of actual present existence; and irresistibly convinces us of the reality of things unseen. . . . Things future and things unseen must become certainties to the mind, if a balanced life is to be lived." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

A writer in the *Biblical World* emphasizes a new element in Faith, that *Faith requires an effort of the soul.* "Perhaps some words of Dr. Dale in his sermon on *Faith in God and Christ* will serve to illustrate the point. 'Faith in God — faith in Christ — is in its final form an act of the will: it is a moral act: it is not an emotion, an impression, the result of considerations which act upon a man from without; it is an act in which he exercises moral choice. To have faith we must will to have it.' . . . The epistle to the Hebrews is an appeal to conscience, to all that is highest and best in man, supported by a reference to a past of glorious records, an exhorting of men to arouse themselves, to take a firmer grip on the new gospel, to hold fast to the new-found faith." "If you are going to keep the things hoped for, you must rouse yourselves to faith, you must make the effort to believe, you must bid your souls be patient and endure."

The illustrations in the rest of the chapter show that the Faith that accomplished such great things required an act of choice between the seen and the unseen, by which the elder generations obtained a good report.

For example, verse 3 is an illustration from familiar things. The world is plainly seen, but we cannot see God who created it, nor the invisible forces by which the world was created and is now governed. So in every case referred to in this chapter there is the same contrast and decision.

II. **ILLUSTRATIONS AND EXAMPLES OF THE POWER OF FAITH**, vs. 4–40. *First Illustration, Abel*, whose faith enabled him to worship according to God's commands, and to do right, although at the risk of Cain's anger and hatred, and the loss of his life. He would not do wrong because his brother did, for he had faith in the unseen God and his approval. He had his reward in the life beyond the grave, and in the influence of his heroic and martyr spirit that still speaks to all the generations that have lived since.

Second Illustration, Enoch, who in a world of lawless wickedness and crime lived a life that pleased the unseen holy God, by means of a faith that made real to him the presence and promises of God and that he is **a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.** The impression is that he was hated and persecuted by the ungodly men around him, just as the Greek statesman Aristides the Just was hated because the people were weary of hearing him continually called "the Just." It may well be that God translated him, as Stephen's spirit was received while he was saying "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." And on his monument if he had any, might well have been written the words, on the monument of the Leighs, heads of the great Sunday School at Stockport, England.

The Master bids, Leave work to-day for new work and for rest.

"He liveth long who liveth well,
All other life is short and vain;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of living most for heavenly gain."

Third Illustration, Noah. A line of God-fearing Sons of God living among the children of men, runs through the whole history from Abel until to-day, guide posts by the way. One of these lights shining in the darkness, a lone star in the sky, was Noah. The line had nearly run out. "The wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually . . . and the earth was filled with violence" through them. Noah was commanded by God to build an ark for the saving of his family, and of the kingdom of God on earth. For many years he was building it.

Noah and the Ark.

Then came the test of Faith, the choice between two courses.

On the one hand was the unseen God, a promise, far in the future, of salvation, and of blessing to all future generations, and the rewards of right living and eternal life in the dim distance.

On the other hand, he would have to break with his neighbors and friends; he would be ridiculed as a fool and lunatic for building a huge ship on dry land, "Noah's Folly." His warnings of danger, his righteous life, a continuous condemnation of theirs, and his preaching of righteousness to those who were filled with violence, would anger them, make them hate him, and seek to kill him.

Which should he choose?

Noah's faith counted the unseen as real, more real than the visible, tangible material things of the present. He kept on building the ark and was saved, he and his family, and became a blessing to the world, made it a "Beautiful Land of Beginning Again," and received God's "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Fourth Illustration, Abraham, who was called to leave his home and friends in Ur of the Chaldees, and to go forth to an unknown Promised Land, **not knowing whither he went.** He believed that the unseen God had sent him to an unseen country. "It was no ordinary emigrant's motive which moved him, but mere faith in God's Promise." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* "Even still the life of faith must be entered on in ignorance of the way to the inheritance, or even what the inheritance and rest in each one's particular case will be, and of the experiences that the way will bring. This is true even of ordinary life." — *Davidson.*

To do this required great faith in Abraham.

More than this. It required still greater faith to live in the land chosen by God for his inheritance, and not hold possession thereof, but to dwell in tents, moving from place to place, as in a strange country full of other nations that did not know the true God; while by faith he **looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God,** a permanent home, well defended with every advantage a city could give.

We know not what Abraham saw in this vision and ideal which he had faith to believe would become real. But in fact the Palestine he saw was the best Promised Land in all the wide world. It was central, in connection with all lands, and yet was

32. And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and *of* Barak, and *of* Samson, and *of* Jephthae; *of* David also, and Samuel, and *of* the prophets:

33. Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

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the best defended. Its capital has been the most influential city in the world. And to-day it is becoming renewed far beyond Abraham's utmost vision. Railroad, electric cars, telegraphs, telephones, walls torn down to broaden the city, wealth, business, water works, electric lighting, a new hospital at Bethlehem — are being realized. So with the Faith of Abraham we too know with certainty that the Kingdom of God we hope for is coming on the earth, " descending out of heaven from God "; and the many mansions Jesus promised, and the celestial city in heaven, are waiting for all who have faith in Him.

Other instances of faith are given in the story of Abraham, and of the patriarchs, by which he grew to become the " Father of the Faithful."

Fifth Illustration. Moses, who showed his Faith by his right choice when before him were opened the parting of the ways, — on the one hand were riches and honors, the pleasures of sin, the treasures of Egypt, the satisfying of high ambitions, a glorious career, and all of the world his heart could wish. On the other hand, suffering affliction with the people of God, the wrath of Pharaoh, driving him for forty years into the wilderness, the guiding and governing of the undisciplined Hebrews for another forty years, requiring a patience, a care and labor almost beyond endurance. Moses had the faith which led him to make the wise and heroic decision rather **to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.** " That which influenced Moses to make this choice was his estimate of the comparative value of the outcome of the suffering with God's people, and of the happiness offered in Egypt." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* He weighed the prospects before him, with their final results, for **he had respect unto the recompense of the reward;** that reward being the good he could accomplish, the promises God made to Abraham, fulfilled in the Jewish nation, and the whole career of Christianity which will be completed in the Kingdom of God on earth; for he **endured as seeing Him who was invisible**, and his work for his people which was inconceivable by him. With this Faith, it was natural that **he esteemed the reproach of Christ**, — what Christ suffered for the redemption of the world — **greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.**

Sixth. A Brief Summary of what others less conspicuous had done through Faith, as real and as great Faith as many of those whose story he had to omit, had shown.

These examples of Faith are of two kinds or classes.

1. Those who performed great deeds of heroism, vs. 32–34.

2. Those who endured great sufferings and persecutions, vs. 35–37.

First Class, vs. 32–34. Those who did Heroic Deeds for the cause of God and righteousness, and of help to their fellow men. These deeds were the product of a Faith that believed that they were doing God's will, that the causes they worked for and fought for would succeed in the end, because they were righteous.

Subdued Kingdoms, Gideon, Deborah, Barak, Joshua, David.

Wrought Righteousness, defended the poor and oppressed and aided good causes, as David, Elijah, Elisha, and some of the Kings and prophets.

Obtained Promises on special occasions. See Josh. 21:43; Judges 7:7; 13:5.

Stopped the Mouth of Lions, as Daniel.

Quenched the violence (" power," Am. R.) **of fire**, referring to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Escaped the Edge of the Sword, of which many instances are recorded, as 1 Sam. 18:11; 1 Kings 19:2.

Out of Weakness were Made Strong. Samson may be in mind; Elijah before Ahab, and on Carmel; Hezekiah, Gideon.

Waxed Valiant in Fight (" mighty in war " Am. R.). As David before Goliath, and several kings.

35. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36. And others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38. (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.

39. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise;

40. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Turned to Flight (the) Armies of the Aliens. Gideon, Jephthah, Barak, Moses, Joshua and several of the Judges.

Second Kind of Victories, vs. 35–37. The Faith that enables us to choose the right, at whatever cost to ourselves, and to trust in God however dark the day.

Women received their dead raised to life again, as the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:8–24); the Shumammite (2 Kings 4:18–37); the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11–17); and the sisters of Lazarus (John 11:2–45). **Others were tortured**, literally "broken on the wheel," **not accepting deliverance** that would be granted on condition of renouncing their religion and their God, — as Daniel and his three companions. In 2 Maccabees 6:18–31, we read of Eleazer, who at the age of 90 was tortured, and Chap. 7 narrates the horrible martyrdom of the seven brethren and their mother. They refused to recant because they had faith in the resurrection to eternal life, which was far better than a few years of respite without eternal life.

Others had Trial of (cruel) Mockings and Scourgings. Read Paul's recital of his experiences for preaching the Gospel of Christ, 2 Cor. 11:23–33.

Bonds and Imprisonment. Jeremiah, the Apostles, Paul.

They were Stoned like Stephen, Paul, Jeremiah, Zechariah (2 Chron. 24:20, 21).

They were Sawn Asunder. There is a tradition that Isaiah met his death by being sawn asunder in the reign of Manassah.

They were Tempted with the strongest inducements, — to yield. "The most fiendish element in the torture of the seven brothers was the pressure put on each individually to recant."

They Wandered about in Sheepskins and Goatskins, the coarsest clothing of poverty, in which they wandered about the among **mountains** and in **deserts**, living on herbage, hiding in **dens and caves** ("caves and holes," Am. R.), **being destitute, afflicted, tormented** ("ill-treated," Am. R.).

Of whom the World was not Worthy. Wicked people did not deserve to have such persons among them. "The words might mean," says the *New Century Bible*, "that they were more precious than the whole world."

Note. All these men of faith, **obtained a good report** ("had witness borne to them through their faith," Am. R.). They were truly faithful, are in the Bible record for our good. Yet they **received not the promise.** All that was promised was not completely fulfilled to them. It could not be fulfilled till Christ the Messiah came. Something better than they had received came with the coming of Christ, and without this coming they could not be made perfect.

III. **WHAT THIS FAITH IS DOING IN MODERN TIMES.** Both in Heroic Crises, and in Common Daily Life.

Heroes in Modern Times. There are no greater heroes in these last days than there were in olden times, but there are more of them. The roll call of Modern heroes is vastly longer. And they are heroes of faith. Delavan L. Pierson puts it this way in the *Sunday School Times:*

"Faith is responsible for most achievements that are worth recording.

"By faith William Carey, when he was called, obeyed, to go out into a country in which he was to preach the gospel of Christ; and in spite of mockery and opposition

he went out, not knowing what was before him. By faith he became a sojourner in India, a land of promise, as in a land not his own, for he looked for a Kingdom which hath eternal foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith Eliza Agnew received power to work for the women and girls of Ceylon, since she counted him faithful who had promised; wherefore there came, from the dead souls of heathenism, a multitude of Christian women to rise up and call her blessed.

" By faith John Scudder, when he was tried, gave up the prospects of ease and comforts in the home land, counting that God was able to supply all needs in the land where he was to labor. By faith David Livingstone, when he was dying, made mention of the ' healing of the open sore of the world ' and left to the church at home the task of abolishing the slave-trade in Africa.

" By faith Alexander Mackay, when he was a lad at his mother's knee, was led to take an interest in missions. By faith Mackay, when he was grown, gave up his prospects for financial success, choosing rather to suffer hardship and ill-treatment in Africa for the sake of Christ, than to enjoy the pleasures of civilization for a season. By faith the walls of Turkish exclusion were broken down, after being compassed about for many years by the prayers of God's people.

" Every victory worth winning has been wrought through faith.

" What shall I more say ? Time would fail us to tell of Adoniram Judson, and Melinda Rankin, and Fidelia Fiske ; of Guido Verbeck and Cyrus Hamlin and Hudson Taylor, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises."

The world to-day is starred all over with missionary Heroes, and it is well to read their fascinating stories.

While writing this I received the *Report of the Carnegie Hero Commission*, a book of more than 200 pages nearly all occupied with descriptions of the 871 persons to whom medals have been given, for heroic deeds, selected as most worthy from 12,500 whose deeds were made known to them, during ten years. Similar funds have been established in eleven countries in Europe. " The greatest deeds of warfare shrink into insignificance beside the efforts made by men to save their fellows at the risk of losing their own life. That is the essential difference between the heroism of civilization and the heroism of barbarism."

All over the country in every city and village there are heroic martyrs not yet known to history, but whose names are recorded in heaven, who in humble homes, in retired sick-rooms, in the recesses of their own hearts, have been crucified on unseen crosses, and burned with invisible flames, and been victors in silent battles, — these, too, belong to the noble army of the martyrs, and heroes, and Golden Deeds.

Golden Deeds. In the preface to the Book of *Golden Deeds*, is given a definition of a Golden Deed. " It is not mere hardihood, nor insensibility to danger, nor deeds of daring for plunder or selfish gain or for honor and fame.

" The true metal of a Golden Deed is self-devotion. One of the most remarkable of its characteristics is that the doer of it is certain to feel it merely a duty. The dross of self is cast away. . . . If it ever be your lot to do a Golden Deed it will probably be in unconsciousness that you are doing any thing extraordinary, and that the whole impulse will consist in the having absolutely forgotten self."

Courage of the Commonplace. There is a beautiful little story the motto of which is " The courage of the commonplace is greater than the courage of the crisis." Everyday life is the practice ground for the faith that makes heroes and martyrs. There is for every one the choice in little things between good and evil, temptations to do wrong when one knows that he ought to do right. These decisions are being made every day at home, in the school, and everywhere, by the young. You admire Heroism. You would like to be a hero. The place to begin is now in your usual life. Wellington, the conqueror at Waterloo, when revisiting his school at Eton and watching the boys on the play-ground, said, " There the battle of Waterloo was won." The courage to do right, in face of ridicule; the courage to be faithful when it makes one unpopular; the courage to come out squarely for whatever is noble, loving, Christian, and stand up to be counted, is the way to gain the true courage in the hour of trial.

And this courage requires the same kind of faith in God, in his promises and in final eternal success, as was required by the heroes we have been studying.

Secretary Robert E. Speer of New York, tells this story of a school boy.

" His name was Edward Thring, and he had gone to the famous English school at Eton as a very small boy. One day he went out to take possession of one of the Fives courts (something like a tennis court). He took possession of his court, according to

12:1. Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

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the rule that the first comers had the right to do so. One of the great bullies of the school came out and tried to drive him off, and the little chap lay down upon the stone, and the big fellow tried to remove him. And little Thring dug his finger-nails down through the crack at the side of the stone, and the big bully tried to kick him off. 'No,' said Thring, 'I will not go; I will die first;' and that name, 'Little Die First,' clung to him."

That spirit, when it is in a battle against wrong or injustice to others is the spirit of heroism.

IV. **AIDS TO FAITH AND ITS VICTORIES**, 12:1, 2. **Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses,** "those named and suggested in Chapter XI, persons whose lives witnessed to the work and triumph of faith. The idea is that their people's history being filled with examples of much-enduring but triumphant faith, they also must approve their lineage by showing a like persistence of faith." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* Personal example of those who have actually done these things is one of the greatest powers for good. "The writer of this letter does not mean that the witnesses are watching us; he means that we are to watch the witnesses . . . 'I gaze out upon the world and I see its sin and sorrow and hear its sighing and its moaning, and my faith is weakened.' 'No, no, no,' says the writer of the letter: 'see the witnesses.' Go back over the past, see what other men have done and see how in one great, orderly, magnificent procession they have all seen the city; and learn this fact, that it is the men who have seen the city that have helped to bless the earth, the realization of that which is the passion of the Divine heart, and, therefore, is the vision of the heart of every man and woman of faith." — *G. Campbell Morgan.*

We are running a race striving with all the might of the runners of the Greek races, to reach the ideal and goal of the Christian life, for the whole world, and for each individual. In the words by which Paul expresses his own experience, — "**Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.**

"**Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**"

It is running a race to "the city of God, where certain conditions are excluded: tears and death and mourning and crying and pain. Certain character is excluded: the fearful and the unbelieving and the abominable. Certain conduct is excluded: a murderer, a fornicator, a sorcerer, an idolater, a liar. Night is not there; that is the opportunity of evil. The unclean is not there; that is the occasion of evil. He who maketh a lie is not there; that is the occupation of evil. The curse is not there; that is the outcome of evil. It is a city from which all evil things are banished.

"But it is also a city of inclusion, and how shall I name the things included? Life is there; light is there; love is there; order and beauty and service are there, flashing and flaming glory. What is this a picture of? The ultimate triumph of God in human affairs. That is the race of which the apostle is speaking." — *G. Campbell Morgan.*

Removing Hindrances. **Let us lay aside every weight**, every incumbrance that interferes with the swiftest running and our earliest reaching the goal. "The word [**weight**] is used of the superfluous flesh which an athlete had to reduce by training. . . . The Christian must put himself under strict moral discipline to bring himself into fit condition for running his race; compare 1 Cor. 9:24–27. At the same time the thought here seems to be less of the period of training than of the preparation just before the race, in which case the metaphor is rather that of stripping away all cumbrous clothing" (*New Century Bible*) as can be seen by any one who watches the college athletes in their running games, or the annual "Marathon" races. **And the sin which doth so easily beset us**, or "which easily encompasses or surrounds us." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* All the sin and evil which surrounds us on all sides as the sea surrounds the dykes of Holland, always pressing to get within; and especially the sin to yield to which we are most tempted.

2. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

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2. **Looking unto Jesus** (1) as the one perfect example, and (2) as the helper and inspirer of our souls. **The author,** the source of our Faith, which Jesus by his coming, teaching, works, and the giving of the Holy Spirit, has brought into our lives. **And finisher** ("perfecter," Am. R.) **of our faith,** bringing it to completion. He never leaves us alone to fall by the way.

Who, for the joy that was set before him, not selfish joy, but the joy of accomplishing the mission for which he came.

Endured the cross, despising (the) shame. He had but begun his work, he had gained but few disciples, there were but meagre signs of his kingdom, — it must have required an immense faith for him to be willing to die in his early manhood, by a death that was regarded as a disgrace.

But by that very death that seemed to be the end of his work, his work was being accomplished, **and** he **is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.** With all power and assured success.

The Two Crowns. "There hangs in the great picture gallery of Venice a single painting, by a second-rate Venetian artist, the history of which I would give much to know. All the other pictures I have ever seen from the same painter's brush are thoroughly commonplace. This one is inspired. I feel sure that it must be the memorial of some deep soul-experience.

"The scene represented in the picture is a spacious and peaceful Italian landscape, with the Master and a group of saints in the foreground. Saint Catherine of Siena, in the black and white garb of a Dominican nun, kneels at the feet of Jesus, Who places on her brow the crown of thorns. In His other hand He holds a golden crown, which is to be the reward of faithfulness and endurance. The golden crown is held where Saint Catherine could not lift her eyes to the face of Jesus without seeing it. . . . The crown of thorns is only given for a little while. The golden crown is for eternity. We sometimes seem to be like Saint Catherine in Bissolo's picture, wearing the crown of thorns, with no vision of the crown of gold." — *The London Christian World Pulpit.*

"Oh, may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues." — *George Eliot.*

LESSON XII. — March 19.

PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN. — Acts 8 : 26–40.

COMMIT vs. 5, 6.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Understandest thou what thou readest?* — Acts 8 : 30.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Dr. Schauffler, in the *Sunday-School Times,* gives this advice to teachers, in reference to the lesson. "Let the teacher be sure that he sees the events with which we have to deal to-day. Imagine that you had to paint the picture. Take a painter's canvas, and make up your mind where, on its surface, you would put the various actors in the event of the day. In this way you will be able to have a concrete picture of all that took place, and then will be better able to describe it all to your class."

See Saul in his persecuting activity.

Watch the Christians rushing from the city into the country, but preaching as they go. And the Apostles remaining.

Picture the story of Simon Magus.

Picture Deacon Philip meeting the Ethiopian, the chariot, the Baptism.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 5, 6, 8; Matt. 28 : 19, 20.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Summer of A.D. 36 or 37. Not long after the death of Stephen.

Place. — The Apostles remained in Jerusalem during the persecution. The new deacons and other Christians were scattered abroad throughout Judea and Samaria preaching. Philip met the Ethiopian treasurer on the road to Gaza.

Persons. — Philip, Simon Magus, Peter, Paul, Candace's treasurer in Africa.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The persecution and its effects.
The case of Simon Magus.
Philip and his works.
The Ethiopian Treasurer of Queen Candace.
The value of reading aloud.
When we need help in understanding the Scriptures.
The suffering Messiah as a puzzle to the Jews.
Why is Baptism the best method of confessing Christ?

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How a Home Missionary Led a Man to Become a Foreign Missionary.

I. How Persecution Spread the Gospel, 8 : 3, 4.
II. Deacon Philip and his Work in Samaria, vs. 5–25.
III. Philip Sent to Prepare a Man for Foreign Missionary Work in Africa, vs. 26–29.
IV. How a Man Found New Light in Old Scriptures, vs. 32–35.
V. Confessing Christ by Baptism, vs. 36–40.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The usual *Commentaries* and *Books on the Acts*.

For Gaza see Geo. Adam Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

O. H. M. S. (On His Majesty's Service) is a capital little booklet, illustrating "Philip ran." (10 cts. a doz. M. B. Munson, 77 Bible House. New York.) On Providential Guidance, see F. W. Robertson's *Life and Letters*, vol. I, p. 13, for an account of how God's providence changed his life. Also E. E. Hale's *Christmas in a Palace*, the story of "Hands off." Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies* has an excellent example of one method of Bible study. See others in Peloubet's *Front Line of the Sunday School Movement* (Wilde Company). *The New Era in Asia* by *Dr. Sherwood Eddy* is fine. *The Missionary and his Critics* is brilliant, by *Sec'y James L. Barton*.

I. **HOW PERSECUTION SPREAD THE GOSPEL**, 8 : 3, 4. Returning to the regular course of the history of the early church, — "a persecution broke out in full fury even before Stephen's death. The Christians fled to all parts of Judea and Samaria, and it seemed for a moment that the Church in Jerusalem was killed." — *Ramsay*.

Saul made havoc of the Church, devastated it as an army devastates the enemy's country, or as wild beasts ravage a flower garden. He put men and women in prison, going as far out as Damascus, 130 miles north of Jerusalem, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter." But this very fierceness of persecution was the means of extending the church, and building it up. There was danger that the disciples would remain too long in Jerusalem, instead of going everywhere preaching the Gospel as Jesus had commanded. Therefore the Christians were scattered abroad as the farmer takes the seed from his barn, and scatters it in all directions.

1. *How this helped the Christian Cause.* A wide range of country was thus evangelized. For those that went from Jerusalem took the Gospel with them, and preached Jesus Christ. The persecution opened the way, in each town or village where they found shelter, for speaking about Jesus and his gospel; for they must explain why they left Jerusalem, and were now wanderers. Their persecution would excite the sympathy of many.

2. It strengthened the faith, and aided the growth in character and in every virtue. It broadened their vision, and increased their power and spiritual life.

3. All this greatly increased the number of believers. *Tyndale's Bible* is a good example. He was not permitted to publish his translation of the Bible for the common people in England, but several of his New Testaments in some way reached England. Henry VII. ordered them to be purchased, and, with all others that could be bought, they were publicly burned at St. Paul's Cross, London, A.D. 1526. But the money paid for them enabled Tyndale to get out a new and more accurate edition, of which three times as many copies were sold in England as had been burned. See the full story in Kenyon's *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*.

Christian Endeavor in Spain furnishes another example. Dr. F. E. Clark held a great Christian Endeavor meeting in Barcelona, Spain, early in May, 1914. The authorities gave them permission to hold a Sunday afternoon session in the Palace of Fine Arts which seats about 4000 people. The Carlists were bitterly opposed, and did everything they could to prevent it. A mob was planned, fire arms were carried by some, the front door of a Protestant church had been drenched with kerosene oil, and an attempt made to set it on fire, a wicked-looking bomb was found in the great hall. But the city authorities did all they could to prevent harm to the Endeavorers. Five hundred policemen and soldiers were on duty, suspicious persons entering the great hall were searched by the police for concealed weapons, and forty-eight " guns " large and small were secured. Nothing could have done so much to make Christian Endeavor known, and advertise it throughout Spain as this attempt to crush it.

Almost every paper in Spain, I suppose, had some account of this great meeting; the illustrated papers pictured it graphically, and it did more to emphasize the growing power of liberal ideas and of religious tolerance than any other event that ever occurred in the Iberian peninsula.

" The matter was brought up in the Cortes, or Spanish parliament at Madrid. " It must not be supposed, however, that the Spanish people generally sided with the would-be assassins, or that even the devout Catholics generally did so."

Except the Apostles. Why did these remain? (1) They were followers of the Good Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep, and not hirelings, who flee because they are hirelings (John 10 : 11–13). So Nehemiah said, " Shall such a man as I flee? " (2) They were the leaders, the organizers of the church; their place, the headquarters of all the disciples. It was not fitting that they should flee. Their steadfastness would strengthen the believers everywhere. Their fleeing would almost break up the church. They must remain at every cost.

They did just what our missionaries have done during wars in Turkey, and in China. Not because they could not escape, but they would not desert their work, nor fail in their duty. As F. W. Robertson wrote : " To stand unchained, with perfect liberty to go away, held only by the higher chains of duty, and let the fire creep up to the heart — this is heroism."

"One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better."

II. **DEACON PHILIP AND HIS WORK IN SAMARIA**, vs. 5–25. Philip is the only one of the Seven, besides Stephen, who is mentioned by name after their appointment. He is to be distinguished from Philip, one of the twelve Apostles.

Of his previous history we know nothing. Besides this work recorded in this chapter, we find him later a resident of Cæsarea, with four daughters gifted in speaking to the people (Acts 21 : 8, 9). Paul and Luke visited them at their home here, and Luke may have learned about his work from the evangelist himself.

The city of Samaria, capital of the District of Samaria, a city then of great strength and beauty rebuilt by Herod on the old site.

Here **Philip preached Christ**, Jesus the Messiah. He preached Him in two ways, *first* by word of mouth declaring the truth, and *second* by the works that Jesus did, the kind of works the Messiah the Son of God would naturally do.

Simon Magus, *i.e.* the Magician, was in the city practicing sorcery, bewitching the people, giving out that he was some great one, and making the people believe him to be the great power of God. This sorcery was contrary to religion, a caricature of religion and of such miracles as Christ wrought — always to help people, and never merely to excite wonder (" Wonders " in the Gospels is never used alone but always in connection with some other word, as " signs." " In the Bible, sorcery is in every instance resorted to when people desire the accomplishment of some purpose contrary to morality or religion." — *Standard Bib. Dic.*

" Philip in his preaching took no notice of Simon the sorcerer. There are some persons who think we ought to send missionaries to argue down the infidels. What did Philip do? He preached Christ. Philip did not argue down Simon, he *superseded* him. The daylight does not *argue* with the artificial light. The sun does not say, ' Let us talk this matter over, thou little, beautiful, artificial jet.' The sun does nothing but Shine! What then? Men sneakingly put the gas out. ' Let Your light so shine.' *Life* is the unanswerable logic. *Holiness* is the invincible argument. *Charity*, love, benevolence, chivalry, self-sacrifice, — these form the shining host that

26. And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

27. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

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will chase all competitors away." — *Joseph Parker*. One of the most effective missionaries in the world told me that this is the only way he could succeed. In his first efforts he began to argue against the other religions, but it was a failure, for people would not come to hear. Ever since then he has preached Christ, shown what Christ has done and will do, and has accomplished a wonderful work.

The other way Philip preached Christ was by his doing in the name of his Master the kind of works that Jesus did, always for the good of the people, never for himself. Medical work now takes the place of the miracles of the apostolic age. Unclean spirits were cast out, examples of what Jesus did and is doing for men's souls, as the spirits of war, intemperance, lust, ambition, selfishness. The people saw the works of Jesus, **and there was great joy in that city.**

The Apostles at Jerusalem, when they learned what Philip was doing in Samaria sent two of their number, Peter and John, to help him. They dealt with Simon the Magician, preached and bore witness to the truth Philip had preached, and returned to Jerusalem, preaching in many villages of the Samaritans on the way.

III. **DEACON PHILIP SENT TO PREPARE A MAN FOR FOREIGN MISSIONARY WORK IN CENTRAL AFRICA**, vs. 26–29. While Philip was still in Samaria, perhaps questioning what he should do, an **angel of the Lord** came. Whether he appeared in some visible form, or by some inward communication, or by vision, is not revealed, and is a matter of small consequence. But in any case it was a real messenger bringing a real message from God.

Go toward the south (from Samaria) **unto the way** that led southwest **from Jerusalem unto Gaza**. The Samaritan road crossed or joined into the road from Jerusalem, the great highway of commerce and travel to Egypt and thence to all parts of Africa. **Which is desert.** Uncultivated pasture lands. It is uncertain whether **desert** refers to the country, the desert road, or to the old city of Gaza (George Adam Smith) which had been deserted for the new city nearer the sea. Am. R. has "unto Gaza; the same is desert."

27. **And he arose and went.** Apparently under sealed orders, as so often in life, not knowing the object of his journey. Government ships are often sent out with sealed orders not to be opened till out at sea, so that by no means could their destination or purpose be revealed to the enemy.

"I know not where I am going, but well do I know my Guide."

Very few persons at the beginning of life know just how and where they will be or what they will be doing in later life. In the *Life and Letters of Rev. F. W. Robertson* we are told that so simple a thing as the barking of a dog changed the whole course of his life. Almost every older person has had such guidance if he is willing to be guided by God's messenger.

Take the experience of the author of this book. My mother dedicated her oldest son to the Foreign Missionary work. This was her daily prayer. From the time I became a Christian, I planned to go. I studied the Oriental language, I was under appointment to go to India. Then a messenger of the Lord said plainly Stay at home. I was guided to take up my present work, as Philip was guided to the Ethiopian, to interpret God's word. After some years I learned that my books on the Sunday School lessons were used in every Mission station of the A. B. C. F. M. chiefly for the Native helpers, and I gladly supplied them. And Missionaries have told me over and over again that I am preaching more in each of several Eastern lands than if I had gone there in person. At length my mother's prayers were answered.

And behold. Used characteristically by Luke of sudden, and as it were providential interposition. They seem to have met at the crossing of the roads, or Philip turning to the right when he came to the Gaza road was overtaken by the Ethiopian's chariot. **A man of Ethiopia.** A general term for the lands south of Egypt. But from the name of Queen Candace it was probably Meroë, a country which lay on the right bank of the Nile from its junction with the Atbara, as far as Khartoum, and

28. Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.
29. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.
30. And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

thence to the east of the blue Nile to the Abyssinian Mountains. **Of great authority.** A man of power, of wide influence, a prince. **Under Candace.** Not the name of an individual, but of a dynasty, as Pharaoh in Egypt, and Cesar in Rome. **Queen of the Ethiopians.** The kingdom of Meroë was governed by queens in the time of Augustus, and, according to Eusebius, even to his time, three hundred years after Christ. **Charge of all her treasure.** Chancellor of the exchequer, secretary of the treasury.

Road leading to Gaza.

It is regarded as improbable that he was a Jew or a full Jewish proselyte, for eunuchs were not permitted to join the congregation (Deut. 23 : 1), but he may have been a "proselyte of the gate," or one who in general adopted the worship of the Jews without becoming a Jew. **Had come to Jerusalem for to worship.** This shows that he was a sincere seeker and inquirer, a soul hungry for the true religion. He had obtained glimpses of the truth from the Jewish residents in Ethiopia, and was seeking for more. Having tasted of the stream, he sought the fountain. Having caught glimpses of the true light he wanted more light, and he travelled a long distance, at great expense, that he might obtain it.

He was now on his way home. "A traveller of such high rank, with a long journey before him not free from danger, was of course accompanied by some considerable retinue of servants and guards." — *Ramsay*. While riding along the lonely road, he was reading aloud, for Philip could hear him.

Reading the Scriptures aloud is one of the best means of understanding them, for to read well we must understand every shade of meaning, every place of emphasis. I know a minister who reads aloud the passage of Scripture for his Sunday services, several times before he reads in the pulpit. I once heard a great author read one of his stories so poorly that if I had not known and admired his books before I heard him, I would never have wanted to read them. I have heard ministers read the Scriptures so poorly that the Bible did not seem so interesting after they had read it as it did before. "As was natural in that period, when Greek was the language of educated men, the Ethiopian was reading the Greek translation," which was made in Egypt.

Word came to Philip from the Lord, as the Ethiopian drew near, that here was the opportunity for which he was sent to this lonely road, **Go near and join thyself to this chariot.** An excellent illustration is found in *Pilgrim's Progress*, where Christian is wandering around in doubt, and meeting Evangelist is directed to the right way.

30. **And Philip ran thither**, not only showing the eagerness of his obedience, but from necessity, if he would join the company of travellers. "Just as big a demand for men with speed as for horses with speed. Wanted: boys who can get there and get back. Running indicates interest. Also life." — *Ridgeway* in *S. S. Times*.

"When life-saving service crews go out to a wreck, they go as Philip did. The fire department always goes on a run. I read of the captain of a certain fire company who strolled leisurely down to a burning building, surveyed it calmly, and said, 'That's a very proper fire. I guess I will go home and get on my uniform.' Is this the way we do our Christian service, — go to prayer-meeting, go to look after the

31. And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

32. The place of the Scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

33. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

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poor, go to attend meetings of the Associated Charities, go to visit the sick." — *Maclaren, Expositions of Scripture.*

And while running beside the chariot he overheard **him read the prophet Esaias** (Isaiah). The citation which follows shows that he was reading from the Greek translation made in Egypt, and not from the Hebrew. Philip of course knew Greek and the Greek scriptures, and while he was walking or running beside the chariot, he asked, **understandest thou what thou readest?** Do you realize to whom these words refer, or how they can belong to the Messiah, who according to the same book was to be the Wonderful, the Prince of peace? (Isa. 9:6, 7). The Ethiopian prince replied: **How can I, except some man should guide me?** and he invited (" besought," Am. R.) **Philip** to **come up** into the chariot **and sit with him.**

The House by the Side of the Road. " In the beginning of the Sixth Book of Homer, a character is described of whom it is said, ' He was a friend to man; and he lived in a house by the side of the road.' Now, that is a fine and ample biography."

"Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
Where the race of men go by —
The men who are good and the men who are bad,
As good and as bad as I.
I would not sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban —
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

"I see from my house by the side of the road,
By the side of the highway of life,
The men who press on with the ardor of hope,
The men who are faint with the strife.
But I turn not away from their smiles nor their tears —
Both parts of an infinite plan —
Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
And be a friend to man." — *Sam Walter Foss.*

IV. **HOW A MAN FOUND NEW LIGHT IN OLD SCRIPTURES**, vs. 32–35. The Talmud asks the question, " Who is the wise man? " and answers, " He who is not ashamed to receive information from any one." **The place** (" passage," Am. R.) **of the Scripture which he read**, Am. R. " was reading," **was** Isa. 53:7, 8. The Septuagint or Greek translation which the Ethiopian was reading " sometimes differs considerably from the Hebrew; and the second of the two verses that he recited in the Greek is incorrect and obscure. It was therefore not strange that the reader, without some one to guide him, found himself unable to comprehend the words, or understand who was described in them. The second verse (Isa. 53:8) is given in the Revised Versions of the Old Testament thus: ' *By oppression and judgment* (that is, by an unfair sentence) *he was taken away: and as for his generation* (that is, the men of his time), *who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living?* ' " — *Ramsay.*

The verses quoted are a portion of the prophet's vision of the suffering Messiah. The picture is true in some degree of those good men of the nation who gave up their lives in an evil world to the making of the world better; but it was complete and ideal and perfect only in Jesus Christ giving his life for his people, and his body and spirit as an atoning sacrifice for their sins. Prof. George Adam Smith " asserts what none but prejudiced Jews have ever denied, that this great prophecy, known as the fifty-third of Isaiah, was fulfilled in One Person, Jesus of Nazareth, and achieved in all its details by Him alone." **He was led as a sheep to the slaughter.** He unresistingly went to his sacrificial death on the cross, as the lamb for the evening sacrifice to the altar. The very power of his death over men arose from the fact that they went voluntarily, out of love for man, to the cross, when at any time " twelve legions of angels " were ready to deliver him from his enemies (Matt. 26:53).

33. **In his humiliation his judgment** (justice) **was taken away.** A fair trial was not given him, as is clearly seen in the accounts of the trial of Jesus in the Gospels. **And who shall declare his generation.** Am. R. " His generation who shall declare? " that is, " As for his generation (*i.e.* his contemporaries) who among them considered

34. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

35. Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

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that he was cut off out of the land of the living?" — *New Century Bible.* "His death made no impression on the world at that time." So Delitzsch, "They did not recognize the meaning of his death, or realize the importance of what was taking place."

"The words may mean, 'Who shall declare the wickedness of the generation in which he lived?' their wickedness in their treatment of him." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* It was beyond words to express, as is seen in the horrors of the destruction of Jerusalem.

Rackham suggests that "generation" refers to his spiritual descendants, the uncounted numbers of his disciples.

Schaff refers "generation" to his divine ancestry. How few in the then world realized or could realize in its fulness and power that Jesus was the Son of God the everlasting Father?

34. Of whom speaketh the prophet this? The two pictures of the Messiah in the book of Isaiah and the other prophets must have been a great puzzle to the Jews. No portraits or descriptions of the same person could be more irreconcilable or contradictory.

On the one hand the Messiah is a great Prince of Peace, a glorious, ever-living king triumphing over the world, a deliverer of the Jews, with an everlasting kingdom, full of all that is rich and beautiful, and pure and happy, beyond words to express.

On the other hand, he is a man despised and rejected of men, almost unrecognized by his nation, ignored by the world. He died in early life, after a brief and simple career, and was buried.

Only the facts could solve the problem, and show that the latter picture of a suffering, atoning Saviour, could make the first picture true. It was only by the cross that he could deliver his nation and change the world into the Kingdom of Heaven.

There are many such seeming contradictions in nature. Take a common instance. Water is 700 times heavier than air. Can you tell how it is possible that thousands of tons of water in the form of clouds are held in the sky by thin air that will not hold a drop that you let fall from your finger. All the mighty rivers in the world were once held in the sky by air only one seven hundredth as heavy.

The need of interpretation. In Washington Irving's *Alhambra* is a story of "The Moor's Legacy." A vast treasure was hidden within the mountain, but it required three things to obtain it, — (1) diligent search, (2) certain written words, and (3) the living voice. These three best reveal to us the treasures of the scriptures. Almost everything in the Bible can be understood by everyday people sufficiently to guide them in the way of life and usefulness. There is not a duty, a hope, a truth, a blessing, but in some part is made plain to every one who will read it with common care.

At the same time there are truths and riches, and visions and blessings in it that can be best understood by the interpretations of those who have studied and experienced and lived near to God and been filled with the Holy Spirit. That is the meaning of sermons, and Sunday schools, and books, and lectures, and meetings, and colleges, and libraries.

Every reader and thinker has read books which have been to him almost like a new revelation. Every little while in my life I have come across such books which have marked almost epochs in the development of thought and work. The Scriptures are like a mine, over which we have often walked without knowing the treasures beneath our feet. They are like the powers of nature, which have always contained the treasures of the telegraph, telephone, of electricity, of steam for power, of coal for warming, and yet men did not know of them. See the interpretation by Ruskin of a few lines of Milton's *Comus*, in his *Sesame and Lilies. Pilgrim's Progress*, "The House of the Interpreter," at the beginning of Christian's new life.

By means of this passage of Isaiah the Ethiopian was reading Philip found his opportunity for preaching Christ. Philip showed the strange and marvellous correspondence between the many descriptions of the Messiah in the prophets and the then well-known life of Jesus of Nazareth. He placed Jesus in his life, death, and character, beside the picture of the Messiah which the prophets had painted, and all could see that the picture was a portrait of Jesus. He could also explain how this humiliation

36. And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

37. And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

38. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

and sacrifice were the means by which the glories of the Messiah and his kingdom were to be attained, and he could illustrate it by the character of the church, its deeds and its influence as already shown in Jerusalem.

"What higher work is there than to help another to a clearer vision of truth, or to a nobler sense of duty, to encourage in good and inspire to high ends." — *Prof. Hugh Black* in *The Gift of Influence.*

V. **CONFESSING CHRIST BY BAPTISM**, vs. 36–40. **As they went on their way they came to a certain water.** Marubah, about a day's journey from Hebron toward Gaza, which Dr. Thomson calls "a fine stream of water, deep enough in some places even in June to satisfy the utmost wishes of our Baptist friends." "This Marubah," says Dr. Hovey, "is merely a local name for the great Wady Surar, given to it on account of copious fountains which supply it with water during summer."

Philip's Fountain.

Supposed site of the Baptism of the Eunuch.

And the eunuch said, See, here is water, or simply, "Behold water." **What doth hinder me to be baptized?** This was saying, "I believe in Jesus as the Messiah, I accept him as my Saviour, and now I wish to confess him by baptism," as all other Christians had been doing. He had doubtless seen this rite in Jerusalem, and probably discussed the question with Philip.

37. If thou believest, etc. This verse is omitted in the Am. R., because it is wanting in the best manuscripts, and was probably inserted from some marginal note made to keep readers from error. But it is the true answer to the Ethiopian's question. As Professor Knowling says, "These words may well have expressed what actually happened, as the question in v. 36 evidently required an answer." **I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.** He believed with his mind and his heart. He believed in him as his Master and his Saviour. Such faith, leading to love and obedience, is salvation.

38. He commanded the chariot. He ordered the chariot-driver to stop, and of course the whole retinue would see what took place, and they may certainly be regarded as the nucleus of a congregation to be established in Ethiopia. **He baptized him.** This was the rite through which he made a public profession of his faith in Jesus. It is expressly said that both went down into the water.

I was much interested in the address of Secretary Lane on Flag day in June, 1914, to the clerks of his department. He represented himself as the Flag speaking to "the makers of the Flag."

"Let me tell you who I am. The work that we do is the making of the real flag. I am not the flag, not at all. I am but its shadow. I am whatever you make me, nothing more. I am your belief in yourself, your dream of what a people may

39. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

40. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cesarea.

become. . . . Always I am all that you hope to be and have the courage to try for. I am song and fear, struggle and panic, and ennobling hope. I am the day's work of the weakest man, and the largest dream of the most daring. . . . I am the clutch of an idea, and the reasoned purpose of resolution. I am no more than what you believe me to be, and I am all that you believe me to be. I am what you make me, nothing more. I swing before your eyes as a bright gleam of color, a symbol of yourself, the pictured suggestion of that big thing which makes this nation. My stars and my stripes are your dreams and your labors. They are bright with cheer, brilliant with courage, firm with faith, because you have made them so out of your hearts, for you are the makers of the flag, and it is well that you glory in the making."

This is a good illustration of the way we should feel toward the symbols, emblems, and sacraments of our religion. They are real and powerful to us according as we make them. We can use them as mere forms, and shadows of truth, or we can fill them with meaning, almost in the words Secretary Lane used in speaking of our Nation's Flag.

39. **The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.** "The expression asserts that he left the eunuch suddenly, under the impulse of an urgent monition from above, but not that the mode of his departure was miraculous in any other respect."

40. **Philip was found at Azotus**, the ancient Ashdod, 10 miles north of Gaza. Here he first came to himself and realized where he was. **Preached in** (Am. R. "preached the Gospel to") **all the cities.** Along the great coast road to Syria, between Azotus and Cæsarea. "The circuit may have included Ekron, Rama, Joppa, and Lydda, in all of which Jews were numerous." — *Cook.* **Till he came to Cesarea.** Cæsarea became Philip's home. He probably made it for many years the centre of missionary enterprises. After some 20 years, we find him there, when Saul, who, at the time Philip was riding in the chariot with the Ethiopian, was breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, and had been transformed into Paul, was welcomed, together with St. Luke, the writer of the "Acts," by this same Philip the deacon and his four prophet daughters, as the great and honored Christian missionary. Cæsarea was distant about 70 miles from Jerusalem, and was situated on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

39. The Ethiopian **went on his way rejoicing.** Doubtless he used all his power, and character, and rank to spread the good news and to evangelize the kingdom. Schaff says, "There is a tradition that this minister of Candace, whose name was Judich, preached the gospel, on his return to Ethiopia, with great success, and that his royal mistress was among his converts." Thus Philip's convert became a missionary in his own country.

"God gives each man one life, like a lamp, then gives
That lamp due measure of oil. Lamp lighted
Hold high, wave wide
Its comfort for others to share." — *Browning.*

LESSON XIII. — March 26.

REVIEW. — THE GREAT MULTITUDE.

READING LESSON: Revelation 7:9-17.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.* — REV. 7:16, 17.

In that charming little book, *The Stars and the Earth* (now out of print), it is shown that there is some place in the universe, some star, where the light from any event on

the earth could be seen by a perfect eye as actually taking place, because the light from that scene had just reached that point. From a star so distant that it would take light 1880 to 1890 years to go from this world to that star, the events that we have been studying the last three months, so far as they have taken place out of doors, are actually visible to an eye keen enough to use those rays, and are now being transacted in the orderly procession of events we have been studying.

Imagine that we are now in that distant star with a sufficiently powerful telescope, gazing at the scenes in the early years of Christianity.

They will present scenes like moving pictures.

See that during the week beginning with the Sunday on which was taught Lesson XII, each scholar reads each day one of the eight chapters of Acts studied during the quarter.

General Information. Before the detailed Review by pictures certain facts should be fixed in the memory of the scholars.

The Period extends from A.D. 30 to 36 or 37, — six or seven years.

The Movement of the History. The resurrection of Jesus. The coming of the Holy Spirit. The change in the Apostles, especially Peter, 3000 Christian believers baptized. The beautiful fellowship. Wonders and signs for the blessing of the people. The beginning of persecution. The increase in numbers and power. A difficulty overcome. The seven deacons. Stephen's work and death. Persecution. Christians sent throughout the country. Philip and the Ethiopian, the beginning of Missions. Great enlargement of the church.

Leading Workers. The Apostles, especially Peter and John. The 120 disciples of Jesus while living. Joseph Barnabas. The seven deacons, especially Stephen and Philip. Queen Candace's secretary of the treasury. Gamaliel was friendly in a way.

Enemies. Mockers, accusing the Apostles. Priests, Sadducees, Captain of the Temple, Annas and Caiaphas, high priests, Ananias and Sapphira, The Sanhedrin, Elders, Scribes, false witnesses, Saul, Simon the Magician.

WORD PICTURES OF THE EARLY CHURCH

These may be distributed to members of the class a week or two before the Review Sunday. The scholars should be so familiar with the subject that they can mentally see the event, and describe what they see.

1. Where, when, and why the event took place.
2. What it all looked like, and what happened.
3. Call the chief persons by their names.
4. The other members of the class add anything omitted, and make corrections if any are needed.
5. Make all the word-pictures as vivid and picturesque and dramatic as possible.

First Picture.	The Ascension of Jesus.
Second Picture.	The Prayer Meeting and the Descent of the Holy Spirit.
Third Picture.	Peter Preaching; and its Effects.
Fourth Picture.	The Cure of the Lame Man.
Fifth Picture.	How Peter gained an Opportunity to Preach to the Rulers; and the Results.
Sixth Picture.	Wonderful Cures and their Effect, 2 : 43; 4 : 30; 5 : 12–16; 8 : 7, 8.
Seventh Picture.	The New Christian Church, 2 : 41–47, 4 : 31–37.
Eighth Picture.	The Two Traitors, chapter 5.
Ninth Picture.	The Seven Helpers.
Tenth Picture.	Stephen the Martyr.
Eleventh Picture.	Philip and the Ethiopian.

APRIL 2 — JUNE 25, 1916.

LESSON I. — April 2.

CONVERSION OF SAUL. — Acts 9:1–31; (compare also Gal. 1:11–17; 1 Tim. 1:12–17).

PRINT Acts 9:1–11, 17, 19. COMMIT vs. 17, 18.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.* — 1 TIM. 1:15.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The main purpose of the teacher in presenting this lesson on the greatest of all conversions to Christianity will be to bring about just such conversions in his class, if any of his pupils are not yet Christians. It will generally be a good plan to write to the pupil during the week, asking him to study the lesson with the thought of Christ's appeal to him particularly in mind. Seek an opportunity for a private talk with him after the school session, if only for a minute, asking him if he will not now decide for the Christian life. If all in your class are Christians, emphasize the need of work to bring their comrades to Christ.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 17, 18; Acts 26:19; 2 Cor. 5:17.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — 36 A.D., according to Hastings's *Bible Dictionary*. 33 A.D., according to Ramsay.

Place. — Near and in Damascus, the capital of Syria, 140 miles north of Jerusalem.

THE ROUND TABLE.

The character of Saul the persecutor.
Saul compared with the Old Testament Saul.
A description of Damascus.
What is conversion?
What Saul's conversion meant to the world.
What Saul's conversion meant to Saul.
Saul's conversion as a proof of Christianity.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Saul's Conversion, a Mighty Proof of Christianity.

I. SAUL, THE PERSECUTOR, vs. 1, 2; Gal. 1:11–14; 1 Tim. 1:12–17.
II. THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD ON THE DAMASCUS WAY, vs. 3–7.
III. WAITING FOR ORDERS, vs. 8–19.

General View of Damascus.

GENERAL VIEW OF JOPPA

IV. The Beginning of the Great Apostleship, vs. 20–31; Gal. 1:15–17.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Pictures of Paul by Burne-Jones, Pertridge (see *The Bible Beautiful*, p. 238), Doré, Thorwaldsen (Berlin), Van Meire (St. Mark's, Venice), and Durer (*St. Paul and St. Mark*). *Conversion of St. Paul*, by Raphael (Vatican) and by Rubens. *Christ and St. Paul*, Plockhörst.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

The Epic of Saul, a long poem by Prof. W. C. Wilkinson. Poems on the conversion of Saul by Newton (*Olney Hymns*, CXXI.), Keble (*The Christian Year*), Roscoe, Dean Alford. "Paul," a poem by Samuel Johnson. References in Crashaw's poems. Opening chapters of Florence Morse Kingsley's *Paul, a Herald of the Cross*.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Works on the Acts, particularly those by Furneaux, Rackham, and Peloubet (*Teacher's Commentary*). *Lives of Paul*, by Farrar, Conybeare and Howson, Stalker, Lyman Abbott, Gilbert, Taylor, Bird, Weed, Lewin, Cone, Iverach, Weinel, Baring-Gould, Fouard, Monod, etc. Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church*, Chap. XVI. Gardner's *The Religious Experience of St. Paul*, Chap. II. Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible*. Sermons by Phillips Brooks (*The Law of Growth*), Watkinson (*Mistaken Signs*), Spurgeon (Series I. and XVI.), Talmage (Series III. and VI.), Macmillan (*Gleanings in Holy Fields*), etc. Fine description of Damascus in Henry Van Dyke's *Out-of-doors in the Holy Land*.

1. And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

2. And desired of him letters to Dămăs'cus to the synagogues, that, if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jĕrū'sălĕm.

Saul's Conversion, a Mighty Proof of Christianity.

INTRODUCTION. Why is the series of lessons we are beginning very important? Because it introduces us to Paul, the greatest of all Christians, and describes the beginnings of the missionary activities through which Christianity will conquer the world. Paul was not only the greatest Christian, but probably the greatest man that ever lived — a great traveller, a great writer, a great philosopher, a great organizer of men, a great orator, and, best of all, a great follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Next to Christ himself, he has always been the chief inspirer of missionaries, both at home and abroad, and his life is a model for all Christian workers. Let us study it with this thought in view, and try to become Pauline Christians. But first we must view the pit out of which this great Christian was dug.

I. **SAUL, THE PERSECUTOR**, vs. 1, 2; Gal. 1:11–14; 1 Tim. 1:12–17. **What does the name, "Saul," mean?** It signifies, in the Hebrew, *asked of God*. Saul was probably named after the first king of the Hebrews, the fierce persecutor of David — a most fitting name for the persecutor of "great David's greater Son" in the persons of Christ's disciples.

Who were Saul's parents? Pure-blooded Jews and strict Pharisees; but they were Roman citizens, which "may be taken as proof that his family was one of distinction, and at least moderate wealth." — *Professor Ramsay*.

Where was Saul born? In Tarsus, the chief city of Cilicia, at the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea. "Tarsus, when St. Paul was a child, stood before the world at the entrance to the greatest province of the East as a metropolis, a free city with a free harbor, mistress of a large and fertile territory. The enthusiasm with which it had taken up Greek education and civilization made it one of the three great university cities of the Mediterranean world. Strabo speaks of the Tarsian university as even surpassing in some respects those of Athens and Alexandria." — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary*. Saul's words to the Roman officer who rescued him from the Jerusalem mob, "I am a citizen of no mean city" (Acts 21:39) show in what regard he held his birthplace.

Where was Saul educated? At Tarsus he learned tent-making, for the wise rabbinical law required every Hebrew boy to learn a trade. Tarsus was celebrated for its goat's-hair cloth, and the making of tents was the commonest trade there. He re-

ceived at the synagogue school the elements of learning — reading, writing, and simple arithmetic. He was given a thorough grounding in the Scriptures. He was not allowed to go to the university. "A Hebrew would no more have set his boy to the study of the Greek poets and dramatists than a Puritan in the reign of Charles II. would have set his boy to study the dramatic literature of that age. By the age of twelve he had gone up to Jerusalem, where later, and very likely at that time, his sister was living. Here he entered the great Jewish university, under Gamaliel, one of the great Hebrew scholars of his time, and studied with passionate devotion the literature, the law, and the hopes of Israel." — *Abbott.*

To what sect did Saul belong? He was a Pharisee, one of the party advocating and practicing the strictest observance of the law, and adding to the law a multitude of man-made and oppressive particulars.

How did all these elements of Saul's birth and education combine to fit him for preaching the gospel to the Gentiles? His life in Tarsus introduced him to the world of commerce, to traders and students from many lands, and made him adaptable and cosmopolitan. His strict Hebrew home life and education brought him into closest touch with the Jews and gave him entrance to every synagogue. His ready use of Greek and familiarity with Greek customs obtained in Tarsus brought him into touch with the Gentile world. His possession of Roman citizenship made him safe in all parts of the Roman empire. He learned a trade which, unlike that of Christ's fishermen disciples, could be pursued wherever he went.

Why was it natural that Saul should hate the Christians? He was deeply religious, and he felt that the Christians were overthrowing the very foundations of religion. He had never seen Christ or heard him, and his opinion regarding him was formed on the slanders current among the Pharisees, representing Jesus as a heretic, a brawler, an ignorant fanatic, a friend of the lawless and a reviler of the noblest of the nation.

How did Saul persecute the Christians? Threats and the desire to kill them became his very breath of life (read v. 1 in the R. V.). He caused many of the Christians to be shut up in prison (Acts 26 : 10). Stephen was not the only one that was put to death through his activities and with his vote. He persecuted the church "beyond measure," as he afterwards confessed (Gal. 1 : 13).

To what extent did Saul carry his persecutions? Not satisfied with driving the Christians out of Jerusalem, he would follow them to other cities. Therefore he obtained from the high priest written authority to go to Damascus, the nearest great city where there were many Jews and where Roman authority was sufficiently relaxed to allow Jews to be seized and carried off to Jerusalem for trial there. Saul had authority to put into chains all of the Way (a common name of the Christians, owing to their frequent reference to Christ as the Way and to his teachings as the way of life). Whether men or women, he was to seize them and carry them to Jerusalem to be tried by the Sanhedrin. His letters were addressed to the synagogues, indicating that the Christians had not broken away from Judaism, but maintained their connection with the church, as the followers of Wesley for years, and Wesley himself, refused to separate formally from the Church of England.

Who are the present-day persecutors of the church, and how should we feel toward them? They are infidel writers and lecturers and editors. They are saloonkeepers and all others who are trying to force evil upon the nation. Whenever Christians earnestly and actively seek to thwart these attempts, they are persecuted in social and business life. Toward all these enemies of the church we are to exercise a Christian charity, knowing that most of them do it "ignorantly in unbelief." Among them there may be many a man of Pauline possibilities, and we must be more zealous to convert them than to condemn them.

II. **THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD ON THE DAMASCUS WAY**, vs. 3–7. We now approach one of the most dramatic scenes in the entire Bible, and one of the most important in the world's history.

What kind of city is Damascus? This city, the oldest in the world, is in Syria, about 140 miles north of Jerusalem. To-day it has about 150,000 inhabitants, and in Paul's time it was a large city with perhaps 50,000 Jews. The Abana and Pharpar are beautiful rivers, creating the verdure of the city. No wonder Naaman preferred them to the muddy Jordan. Damascus "has given her name to the reddest of roses, the sweetest of plums, the richest of metal-work, and the most lustrous of silks. She is the typical city of the Orient, as New York or San Francisco is of the Occident." — *Henry van Dyke.* "Watered abundantly by the cool rushing streams that descend from the hills, and which run through every street, gush up in innumerable fountains,

3. And as he journeyed, he came near Dâmăs'cus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

4. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

5. And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. *It is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

6. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

7. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

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and are conducted in many channels over the plains; environed by orchards and gardens in which grow profusely the fig, the citron, the pomegranate, and all the most choice and delicious fruits; Damascus is to the Orientals the very image of an earthly paradise." — *Bishop Lee.*

How must Saul have journeyed to Damascus? He would travel on horseback, a journey of about six days.

What happened as Saul approached the great city? Tradition has fixed the event "at Salahijeh, an outer spur of the Lebanon range, at the foot of huge limestone cliffs, where the traveller first catches sight of the boundless plain and the magnificent city of Damascus set in the midst of it. It is a place of pilgrimage to the inhabitants, and is consecrated by the caves and tombs of Moslem saints. For hours Saul had been pass-

Scene of Saul's Conversion, near Damascus.

ing through the dreariest mountain scenery, whose sterile crags, bleaching in the hot sunshine, fatigued body and mind; and now all at once there rushed upon his vision a scene so strangely fair that it seemed as if a new and radiant world had opened up before him. Mohammed, in after years, it is said, captivated by the sight, declined to go farther than this spot, declaring that, as there was but one paradise, his should not be in this world." — *Hugh Macmillan, D.D., LL.D.* It was about noon (Acts 22:6), and the Eastern noon is exceedingly bright; nevertheless, there fell about Saul a light from heaven that was brighter than the sun (Acts 26:13), and in the midst of it he saw the glorified figure of Jesus (vs. 17–27).

What voice did Saul hear? Speaking in Hebrew (Acts 26:14), and thus using the Hebrew *Saoul* instead of the Greek *Saulos*, the glorified Saviour asked, softly and tenderly, **Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?** The statement of Acts 22:9 that the others of the company "heard not the voice" is explained by "taking the verb in the sense of *understood*, as in Mark 4:33; 1 Cor. 14:2." — *Prof. M. R. Vincent.* "The repetition of the name is characteristic of the Jesus of the Gospels — 'Martha, Martha' (Luke 10:41); 'Simon, Simon' (Luke 22:31); 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem' (Matt. 23:3). Here, as there, it marks a mixture of reproof and tender pity." —

Dean Furneaux. "Yes, the Son of God knows his name. Sinner, God knows your name. He knows all about you. He knows the street you live in, the number of your house." — *D. L. Moody.* All the words of the greeting are significant: *Why:* what evil have I done? *Persecutest:* Saul thought he was merely upholding the law, but Jesus saw beneath this a heart of hatred. *Me:* "for what is done to Christ's disciples he takes as done to himself, whether it be good or whether it be evil." — *Condensed from a sermon by George Whitefield.*

Illustration. "'God is angry with me,' said Luther one day to the good monk Staupitz. 'No,' answered the venerable teacher, 'you are angry with God.'" — *Hastings.*

What is significant in Saul's reply, "Who art thou, Lord?" The word, Lord, "is more than a mere word of respect, as in Acts 16 : 30 ; 25 : 26 ; it indicates, as St. Chrysostom noted, a purpose to follow the voice." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* But the question also indicates Saul's lawyerlike caution ; he would know whom he was following.

How did Jesus make the great disclosure? In words that rang in Saul's ears forever after, **I am Jesus whom thou persecutest**; and then he added (Acts 26 : 14 — the best manuscripts and the R. V. omit the words here), **It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks** (R. V., "goad"). As Christ in his human body spoke always in parables, so in his spiritual body he used a common proverb, which expressed the futility of mortals' contending against God's designs. Some consider the "pricks" to be "the plural of majesty," indicating the sharp-pointed instrument still carried by ploughmen in Palestine. But Hastings, in *The Great Texts of the Bible*, says that when the rebellious oxen flung out their heels in angry protest they encountered "a somewhat cruel device. The beam or shaft of the ploughshare was faced with small, sharp iron spikes, and when those rebellious limbs of theirs were flung furiously back it was only to have them pricked and sorely wounded." We do not know just what were the "goads" in Saul's case. Perhaps the remembrance of the angelic face of Stephen as he was stoned to death was working upon the conscience of the persecutor.

Illustration. "It is only when the hands are on the hour that the clock strikes, but through the whole sixty minutes the whole machinery has been moving towards this very thing. The clock struck in this case on the way to Damascus, but the wheels had been going round a long time bringing it to this point." — *Rev. J. G. Greenhough.*

What was characteristic in Saul's response to this disclosure? "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" is probably taken from the account in Acts 22 : 10. Saul was a man of action. With him to perceive a truth was to seek at once to carry it out in his life. This characteristic made him an apostle and a missionary.

Illustration. St. Francis ordered a refractory monk to be placed in a grave, and earth to be slowly shovelled in upon him. As the culprit became buried deeper and deeper St. Francis stood above him and repeatedly asked, "Are you dead yet?" meaning, "Is your self-will dead? Are you willing to obey?" The monk's iron will held out till the last shovelful, which would have completed the burial ; then he said, "I am dead," and thus yielded his will to his superior. Lifted out of monkish subservience, this is what happened to Saul; his will died, and in glad obedience to Christ he for the first time found fulness of life.

What command did Christ lay upon Saul? That he should go on to Damascus, and there await orders from his new Master. His impetuous nature needed to learn patience. His amazed mind needed to brood over the strange experience. His newborn faith needed to be strengthened by meditation. Moreover, he would thus be brought into contact with Ananias, and through him with the Christians of Damascus. Thus Christ leads all his impatient followers on, slowly, step by step, but as fast as they can wisely go.

What is conversion? Literally, a turning about. It is that change in the heart and life which faces them toward Christ instead of away from him, thus reversing the direction in which the person is going.

Illustration. "I read in the newspaper the other day of a wonderful invention to be used in war. It was a *bomb*, with such materials inside the shell, and so contrived as to explode at the touch *of a ray of light!* The bomb might be placed anywhere and do no harm, but let a ray of light fall upon it in particular, and on the instant the thing would awake and burst." — *John A. Hutton.* Thus instantly does an awakened conscience explode the falsehoods which the soul has heaped about itself.

III. **WAITING FOR ORDERS**, vs. 8–19. **How did the great light affect Saul?** His eyes had been closed, and when he opened them he perceived to his horror that he

8. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Dămăs'cus.

9. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

10. And there was a certain disciple at Dămăs'cus, named Ănănī'ăs; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ănănī'as. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord.

11. And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tar'sus: for, behold, he prayeth,

17. And Ănănī'as went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

18. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

19. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Dămăs'cus.

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was blind, so that he had to be led by the hand to Damascus. How different from the proud entrance he had planned!

Why was Saul thus blinded? 1. To emphasize the supernatural character of the vision. 2. To prove its reality. 3. To compel him to meditate for days, without distraction, upon the problems which the vision brought to him. 4. To show him his helplessness in God's hands. 5. To cultivate his humility by rendering him dependent upon others. 6. To give opportunity for Ananias, by restoring his sight, to prove the divine origin of Christianity still further. 7. To give Saul an abiding reminder, in poor vision, of these wonderful events.

What are the indications that Saul's eyes never recovered their full power? His failure to recognize the high priest when brought before him (Acts 23 : 5). The saying (Gal. 4 : 13–15) that the Galatians " would have plucked out their own eyes and given them to him." The use of an amanuensis when he was poor. The signing of his epistles in " large letters " (Gal. 6 : 11). It is probable that this dimness of sight was the " thorn in the flesh " against which Paul prayed so fervently (2 Cor. 12 : 7). This partial blindness must have been a terrible handicap to the active man, but he came even to rejoice in it, as a token of Christ's power and his own glad submission.

Where was Saul taken? To the house of a man named Judas, on Straight Street, the principal street of Damascus. It is still in existence, called Sultana (or Queen) Street, running straight east and west. It was in Saul's day a magnificent thoroughfare one hundred feet wide, with sidewalks shut off by marble colonnades, and, halfway down the street, a triumphal arch whose three subordinate arches may still be traced.

How did Saul spend the next three days? In darkness and in thought so profound and anxious that he could not eat or even drink. On the one side was disgrace among men, loneliness, danger, the loss of all his former friends and of his wealth, estrangement from his family, the ruin of his worldly hopes. On the other side were the demands of justice, truth, and honor, the appeals of his conscience, and the assurance of ultimate victory indicated by the glorious vision of the risen Christ. It was like the " Tempest in a Brain " described by Victor Hugo in *Les Miserables*. It was even like Christ's agony in Gethsemane.

What Christian was sent to Saul? Ananias, a devout man (Acts 22 : 12), learned in the law, honored by all the Damascus Jews even though he was a Christian. Just the man to help Saul. The order to go to Saul came to him in a vision, as Peter was sent to Cornelius.

What encouragement was given him for his errand, that would seem so dangerous? That Saul had been prepared for Ananias by a similar vision, and that Saul was praying; persecution and true prayer do not go together.

Illustration. Spurgeon tells the story of two men, one of them an infidel, who came to a gloomy inn while travelling through Swiss forests, and were half afraid to lodge

there. Their suspicions were confirmed by what they saw within; but after supper their landlord asked permission to conduct family prayers, and did so. As they went to bed the infidel said, "I am not at all afraid now." "Why?" "Because our host has prayed."

Why did Ananias still hesitate to go? He was overpowered by remembrances of Saul's terrible persecutions in Jerusalem, but the Lord encouraged him by a picture of what Saul was to become — a chief apostle of Christ.

How did Ananias respond to the command? Though he doubtless trembled, he went his way to Judas's house, laid his hands on Saul's eyes, called him "Brother Saul," showed him that he knew of the vision of Jesus that had blinded him, and assured him that his sight should be restored and that he should be filled with the Holy Spirit. O for more Ananias Christians, marching off on the path of obedience though their knees shake!

From a photograph by Wilson.

House of Ananias, Damascus.

What was the effect of Ananias's touch on Saul? Scales fell from his eyes (and Luke, the physician, uses technical medical terms for both *scales* and *fell*), at once he received his sight (at least partially), he broke his three days' fast, and immediately received baptism from the no longer timid Ananias.

Illustration. Saul's feelings must have been like those of the daughter of a painter, who had been blind from childhood, but whose sight was restored by a skilful operation. Her first thought was to look upon her father, a noble man in appearance as well as character. As she saw him she cried out, "Just to think that I had this father so many years and never knew him!"

IV. THE BEGINNING OF THE GREAT APOSTLESHIP, vs. 20–31; Gal. 1:15–17. **What did Saul do "straightway"?** He was evidently eager to undo what he could of the terrible harm he had done, and began at once to preach Christ in Damascus, and not to the Gentiles, but in the very synagogues of the Jews. Saul's strength lay largely in his "straightway."

What was the result of his preaching? Amazement at the conversion of the persecutor, and recognition of the proofs Saul gave that Jesus was in reality the Messiah. God was with him in power, as he will be with any one that devotes himself to his service.

What long period of preparation had Saul? So little heed does the New Testament give to the lives of men as compared with the vast interests of Christ and his church that it is only from the casual reference in Gal. 1:17, 18 that we learn of Saul's retirement into Arabia, which must have taken place during the "many days" of v. 23. This retirement lasted three years, or at least one full year and parts of two others. Saul may have gone to the deserts near Damascus, but more likely he went to the Sinai country, where Moses and Elijah found refuge and learned great lessons in quiet. During these three years Saul was studying the life of Christ in the light of the Old Testament prophecies, confirming his faith, praying much, receiving new illumination, and deciding upon his future course. A life work entered upon thus thoughtfully will not be hastily abandoned.

On Saul's return to Damascus, what was the effect of his preaching? He so aroused the hostility of the Jews that they laid a plot to kill him.

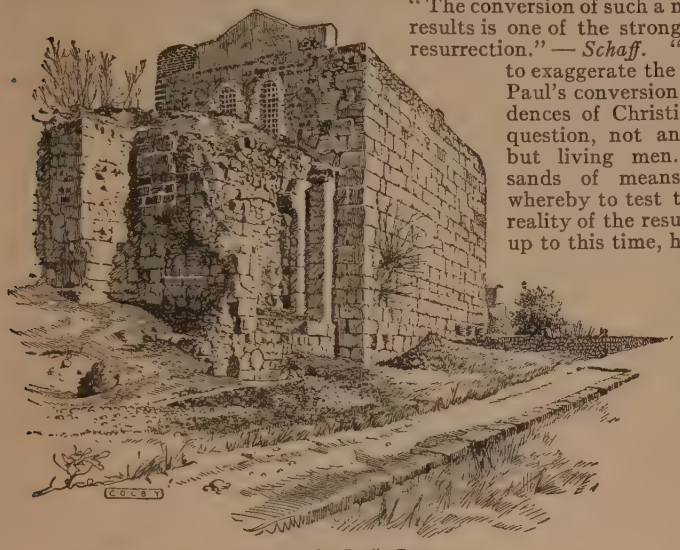
How did Saul escape from Damascus? The governor of the city was a partner in the plot (2 Cor. 11:32), the gates were watched day and night, and Saul was enabled to escape only by using the plan devised by Rahab for the spies from Joshua (Josh. 2:15), being lowered over the wall in a basket, "the tall, strong hamper of Palestine."

Where did Saul go? To Jerusalem, that he might testify of Christ in the city

where he had most bitterly persecuted Christ's followers, and especially that he might meet Peter (Gal. 1 : 18), and discuss his plans with him and James (Gal. 1 : 19).

Why was Saul obliged to leave Jerusalem? Again he made enemies by his bold preaching. Their plot to kill him was discovered, and he was aided to escape to Cæsarea on the coast, whence he journeyed by ship to Tarsus.

Saul's Conversion a Proof of Christianity. "St. Paul is one of the Titanic figures of the past. He is the master empire-builder of the kingdom of God in the world. Such a man's conversion is a tremendous affair." — *Rev. John Kelman.* "That event changed the fortunes of mankind." — *Dean Stanley.* "It ranks by the side of the call of Abraham, the Exodus from Egypt, the overthrow of Jerusalem, the discovery of America, and the reformation of the sixteenth century." — *Bishop Lee.* "The conversion of such a man and with such results is one of the strongest proofs of the resurrection." — *Schaff.* "It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of St. Paul's conversion as one of the evidences of Christianity. He could question, not ancient documents, but living men. He had thousands of means close at hand whereby to test the reality or unreality of the resurrection in which, up to this time, he had so passionately and contemptuously disbelieved. In accepting this half-crushed and wholly execrated faith he had everything in the world to lose, he had nothing conceivable to gain; and yet in spite of all, overwhelmed by a conviction which he felt to be irresistible, Saul the Pharisee became a witness of the resurrection, a preacher of the cross." — *Farrar.* "If we explain away the supernatural element, what was it which changed the whole aim and direction of this man's life?" — *Dean Furneaux.*



Scene of St. Paul's Escape.

Tradition still points to the wall between the round tower and the gate west of it as the place from which Paul was let down at the time of his escape.

If there is one in your class who is not a Christian, Saul's conversion should be a trumpet call to him. The evidence of the truth of the gospel cannot be denied. The same Jesus who appeared to Saul on the Damascus road is making his appeal to-day. He is asking for your allegiance as he asked for Saul's. Give it! He will ennoble your whole life, as he ennobled Saul's. Give it! He will strengthen you, as he strengthened the great apostle. Give it! He will go with you, as he went with Saul, through all the years of your life, and through all the eons of eternity.

LESSON II. — April 9.

ÆNEAS AND DORCAS. — Acts 9:32–43; (compare also Proverbs 31:10–31).

COMMIT vs. 39, 40.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *In all things showing thyself an example of good works.* — Titus 2:7.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

An interesting way to teach this lesson is the following. Draw an outline map showing Jerusalem, Lydda, and Joppa. Connect them by a line, — the road to Cæsarea. Write on separate slips of paper the questions given below, with any others you wish, and paste these upon the map, merely attaching them lightly at one end. Those relating to Peter's tour among the towns and villages will be placed along the road between Jerusalem and Lydda; those relating to the healing of Æneas will be placed in a circle around Lydda; those relating to the summoning of Peter to Joppa will be placed along the road between Lydda and Joppa; and those relating to Dorcas and her resurrection will be placed in a circle around Joppa. The pupils will detach these questions one at a time, in the proper order, read them aloud, and answer them.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 39, 40; Matt. 25 : 37–40; Jas. 2 : 15–17.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — 40 or 41 A.D., two or three years after the conversion of Saul. Caligula became emperor March 16, 37 A.D., and Claudius succeeded him January 24, 41 A.D. Herod Agrippa was made king by Caligula in 37 A.D.

Bust of Caligula.

Place. — At Lydda, about twenty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem, and Joppa, now Jaffa, the seaport of Jerusalem, ten miles further to the northwest.

THE ROUND TABLE.

A word picture of Lydda.
A word picture of Joppa.
"Called to be saints."
Peter's zeal to be imitated.
Dorcas societies: how can our class be one?
How Peter imitated Christ, and how we can.
The character of Dorcas.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Healing and Resurrection: Two More Proofs of Christianity.

I. The Healing of Æneas, vs. 32–35.
II. The Death of Dorcas, vs. 36–39; Prov. 31 : 10–31.
III. Dorcas Restored to Life, vs. 40–43.

THE LESSON IN ART.

The raising of Dorcas is pictured by Masolino da Panicale (Brancacci Chapel, Florence), by Schonherr (Dresden Gallery), and Guercino (Pitti Gallery). See the description in *Heroines of the Bible in Art*, by Clara Erskine Clement.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Works on the Acts. Books on Peter, especially *Peter the Apostle*, by William M. Taylor; *The Apostle Peter*, by W. H. Griffith Thomas; *St. Peter and His Training*, by Rev. John Davidson; *Footsteps of St. Peter*, by Macduff. Chapters in Talmage's *Sermons on the Holy Land;* Elmslie's *Memoir and Sermons* (particularly good); Spurgeon's *Sermons*, Tenth Series; Robertson's *Sermons*, Fifth Series; Morrison's *Footsteps of the Flock;* Maclaren's *Expositions of Holy Scripture;* Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church;* Geikie's *New Testament Hours;* Adeny's *Women of the New Testament; Women of the Bible* (chapter by Rev. George Milligan, D.D.). *Poems* by George Macdonald and Thomas Toke Lynch. Mrs. Charles's story, *The Victory of the Vanquished.*

Healing and Resurrection: Two More Proofs of Christianity.

INTRODUCTION. The conversion of Saul was one of the strongest proofs of Christianity that could be given; now we are to study two miracles, one of healing and the other the great miracle of resurrection, which constitute additional evidences

32. And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all *quarters*, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lȳd'da.

33. And there he found a certain man named Æ'nēăs, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy.

34. And Peter said unto him, Æ'nēăs, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole; arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately.

35. And all that dwelt at Lȳd'da and Să'ron saw him, and turned to the Lord.

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that Christianity is of God. The Almighty is not confined to one mode of proving the doctrine of his Son, nor would he have us so confined. We should study all the evidences of Christianity, enjoy all the experiences of religion, and use all these evidences and experiences, just as a soldier learns to use all his weapons, a carpenter all his tools, and a lawyer all his arguments.

I. **THE HEALING OF ÆNEAS**, vs. 32–35. **Where did we last see Peter?** In Jerusalem, where Saul had his fifteen days of intercourse with him after his conversion; only, Peter had gone for a time to Samaria with John, to follow up the preaching of Philip.

Why did not Peter remain in Jerusalem? His impetuous spirit led him to see what he could do for Christ in wider fields. "He was eager to find out how the churches had been faring; Jesus was whispering to him, 'Feed my lambs.'" — *Rev. G. H. Morrison.*

Where did Peter go from Jerusalem? Into "all parts" (R. V.). "His action was not restricted to the cities as Philip's was (Acts 8 : 40). It included the villages (Acts 8 : 25). It was everywhere. It extended not merely to Judea and Samaria and Galilee (Acts 9 : 31), but also" — long after the time of our lesson — "to Antioch (Gal. 2 : 11), to Corinth (1 Cor. 1 : 2), and, as we may be sure, much farther." — *Sir William M. Ramsay.* Peter was a missionary second only to Paul.

What left Peter free for such work at this time? The conversion of Saul, the persecutor, and even more the fact that the attention of the Jews was turned in another direction than the Christians. In A.D. 39 Caligula ordered his statue to be set up in the temple at Jerusalem, that he might be worshipped as a god in Jerusalem as elsewhere. "The Jewish officials declared that such an outrage could be carried out only over the dead bodies of the citizens. A vast throng gathered before the palace of the Roman governor, and threw themselves on the earth with wild outcries when the governor appeared on the balcony. They declared they would die, but never give way." — *Peloubet's Suggestive Illustrations on Acts.* This excitement and opposition lasted until Caligula was murdered in January, A.D. 41, when Claudius became emperor, and Herod Agrippa king of Judea. Then the persecution of the Christians began again.

Where is Lydda? It is about twenty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem, on the road to Cæsarea, and therefore in the route of Philip as he went about establishing Christian communities. It is called Lod in 1 Chron. 8 : 12, and Ludd in modern Arabic. It now occupies "a fertile hollow in the great undulating plain, surrounded by gardens of olive and various fruit trees. The modern village is very dilapidated, a haunt of dirt diseases, the effect of modern squalor being intensified by the presence of noble ruins testifying to former prosperity." — *Hastings.* The chief of these is the beautiful church of St. George, built in honor of the "patron saint" of England, the conqueror of the dragon, who is said to have been born there, and to have died there. The Crusaders rebuilt this church with much magnificence, but Saladin demolished it in 1191.

Who were the "saints," whom Peter visited in Lydda? The title means "literally 'holy ones,' and is applied to things or persons consecrated to the service of God; hence to disciples of Christ." — *Lyman Abbott.* "There is no Scriptural warrant for restricting it exclusively to any persons as a title of special honor, distinguishing them from all other members of the body of Christ." — *William M. Taylor.*

What man especially did Peter find at Lydda? His name, Æneas, "is a corrupt form of the classical Æneas," the hero of Virgil's Æneid, the middle syllable being short. "It is interesting to remember that this coast was the scene of many old Greek legends, such as that of Perseus and Andromeda." — *Furneaux.* "Though Aeneas is not called a disciple, this appears to be implied in the statement that Peter was visiting the 'saints.' Peter's cure in the name of Jesus Christ makes it almost

necessary to suppose that Æneas had faith in Jesus." — *Professor Gilbert.* He had been afflicted for eight years, as Luke, the physician, carefully notes, with that dread disease, the palsy. This term was used in a wide sense by ancient physicians, and "included not only what we call paralysis, which is rarely very painful, but also catalepsy and tetanus, *i.e.* cramps and lockjaw, both of which were very painful and dangerous." — *Peloubet's Teacher's Commentary on Acts.*

Peter's Eyes. "Peter *found* Æneas, I take it, because he was looking for him. It is the things we look for that we are quick to see, and Peter had won the eyes of Jesus now. What do *you* find when you go to a strange place? The man of science finds new species of plants; the explorer finds strange customs and observances; but the apostle finds a certain man who has been eight years bed-ridden with the palsy." — *Morrison.*

What are some of the evils of long sickness? The terrible monotony of it; the care one is to one's loved ones; the dropping out of the busy work and interests of life; the hopelessness that is likely to settle down upon the soul as the years drag by.

What are some of the compensations of long sickness? Undistracted at least by outward affairs, the sick man has a chance to think much about God. He may come very close to Christ, the good Physician. He may realize the full blessedness of prayer. Many saints have been made upon sick beds.

What wonderful thing did Peter say to Æneas? Very quietly, yet with an intensity of faith, the great apostle said, **Æneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole!** "The purpose of the miracle was, of course, to cure Æneas; but this was subordinate to the greater purpose of leading his soul to Christ." — *Rev. Joseph Dunn Burrell.* "What a vivid belief these early Christians had! It required no small faith in the reality of the Lord's presence and of his power to heal, to say 'Rise' to a man who had been bed-ridden for eight years." — *Dean Furneaux.* "The extreme simplicity with which cures mentioned in Acts were wrought contrasts strikingly with the mystery and the ceremonies associated with the alleged cures of the exorcists and sorcerers of those days." — *Professor Gilbert.*

Why did Peter bid Æneas to arise, and make his bed? To-day in Palestine, as in ancient times, "the bed is a thin mattress, stuffed with cotton or wool, about six feet long and three wide, generally laid, when night comes, upon the floor of the room. These beds are very thin and roll up into small bundles, and so can be easily carried." — *Neil.* Peter bade Æneas perform for himself this service of stowing away his bed which for so many years had been performed for him by others, in order (1) to quicken and test the man's faith; (2) to prove the reality of the cure; and (3) Peter remembered that Jesus had given the same command to the palsied man who had been let down through the roof to him, and he would follow his Lord even in the manner of the miracle. "Æneas felt a tingling life in those limbs which had been paralyzed so long; a strange sensation ran along his nerves; and ere Peter had finished the command, 'Arise, and make thy bed,' he was able to obey it, and rose at once to fold up his couch." — *William M. Taylor.* In the same way in modern times a wise pastor or friend, when one has been raised from the sickness of sin to the new life in Christ, will set him to work for Christ in the church and Sunday school and home, knowing that nothing consolidates Christian character like Christian labors.

What was the effect of the miracle? "All that dwelt at Lydda and Saron (Sharon) saw him, and turned to the Lord." "The plain of Sharon — a beautiful and fertile district — extended from Joppa to Cæsarea, a distance of thirty miles." — *Prof. H. T. Andrews.* "The true 'Rose of Sharon' was shedding his spiritual fragrance all around, and 'the wilderness and the solitary place was made glad.'" — *Macduff.* "All" "may be taken to mean that a general conversion of the inhabitants followed." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* "If Philip had prepared the soil, there may have been many at Lydda who were inclined, before Peter's visit, to accept Jesus as the Messiah." — *Dean Furneaux.*

The Wholeness That Christ Gives To-day. Sometimes it is a physical wholeness, aiding the physician and surgeon, and accomplishing results impossible to science alone. Always it is a spiritual wholeness, healing the ravages of sin, binding up rifts in friendships, restoring the weakened will, cleansing the memory and purifying the passions. The frequent change from a besotted drunkard to a clear-headed, clean-hearted Christian worker is a miracle greater than the curing of Æneas.

II. **THE DEATH OF DORCAS**, vs. 36–39; Prov. 31:10–31. **Where was Joppa?** "It was the only seaport which the Jews ever possessed for themselves." — *Rackham.* It is about thirty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem, with which it is now connected by

36. Now there was at Jŏp′pa a certain disciple named Tăb′ĭtha, which by interpretation is called Dôr′cas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

37. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom, when they had washed, they laid *her* in an upper chamber.

38. And forasmuch as Lŷd′da was nigh to Jŏp′pa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that he would not delay to come to them.

39. Then Peter arose, and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dôr′cas made while she was with them.

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a railroad. To its perilous harbor Solomon, and later Zerubbabel, brought the material for the temple, by ship from Lebanon. From Joppa Jonah took ship for Spain, running away from his duty in Nineveh. Judas Maccabæus set the town on fire. Napoleon had five hundred prisoners massacred near by. "Judas Maccabæus, Antiochus, Herod, Cestius, Vespasian, Omar, Saladin, Richard, Godfrey, Napoleon, have all in turn laid siege to it, and it has at least once been entirely effaced." — *Abbott.* It is now called Jaffa, and has a population of about 8000. "None who have seen it can fail to be struck with its commanding position, built on a bold conical bluff 150 feet high, crowned with a ruined Turkish castle or citadel. The houses rise tier upon tier from the water's edge." — *Macduff.*

What notable Christian lived at Joppa? Luke speaks of her as **a certain disciple.** Tabitha was her Hebrew (Aramaic) name and Dorcas her Greek name, both meaning *gazelle,* "which in the East was a favorite type of beauty. It was customary at this time for the Jews to have two names, one Hebrew and the other Greek or Latin; and this would especially be the case in a seaport like Joppa, which was both a Gentile and a Jewish town. She may have been known by both names." — *Prof. M. R. Vincent.*

Site of the House of Tabitha near Joppa.
Her tomb is marked by a group of sycamore trees near the house.

Why was Dorcas greatly beloved? She was **full of good works and almsdeeds.** Her life, we may imagine, corresponded to the beautiful picture of a wise and capable woman given in Prov. 31 : 10–31 — a picture still well worth studying even in these days of the "feminist movement." "One of the most significant features in our modern church life is the development that has been given to the ministry of Christian women; and of this ministry we have the earliest recorded instance in the history of Dorcas." — *Rev. George Milligan, D.D.* "If some impatient maiden, trained in all the schooling of the day, is tempted to despise her needle, let her ask herself whether she may not be slighting one of her best friends." — *Prof. W. F. Adeny.*

"A man of words, and not of deeds,
Is like a garden full of weeds."

"A half-paid shipwright climbs the hill and reaches home, and sees his little boy well clad, and says, 'Where did these clothes come from?' And they tell him, 'Dorcas

has been here.' In another place a woman is trimming a lamp; Dorcas brought the oil. In another place a family that has not been at table for many a week are gathered now, for Dorcas has brought bread." — *T. De Witt Talmage.* "Dorcas gives us an insight into the cause of the triumph of Christianity in the Roman world. Nothing could withstand the argumentative force of such a life as hers." — *Burrell.*

Illustrations. St. Zita was a working-girl in the Italian town of Lucca more than six hundred years ago. She had to toil hard, but she lost no opportunity of doing good, becoming a Dorcas to her community. Out of her hard-earned savings she bought cloth, which she made into garments for the poor. "So strong a hold did her name take of the town where she lived that thirty years later, when the great Italian poet Dante was referring to the magistrates of Lucca, he spoke of them, not by their own titles of honor, but as 'St. Zita's Elders.' To this day a yearly festival is held, when the maid-servants of Lucca assemble in the church where the saint's body is laid, and deck her tomb with flowers." — *Milligan.*

"An old legend says that once three young ladies disputed about their hands, as to whose were the most beautiful. One of them dipped her hand in the pure stream, another plucked berries till her fingers were pink, and the third gathered flowers whose fragrance clung to her hands. An old haggard woman passed by and asked for some gift, but all refused her. Another young woman, plain and with no claim to beauty of hand, satisfied her need. The old woman then said, 'It is not the hand that is washed in the brook, nor the hand tinted with red, nor the hand garlanded and perfumed with flowers, that is most beautiful, but the hand that gives to the poor.' As she spoke her wrinkles were gone, her staff was thrown away, and she stood there an angel from heaven." — *J. R. Miller.*

"Queen Maud, the wife of Henry I., went down amidst the poor and washed their sores, and administered to them cordials." — *Talmage.*

"If I might guess, then guess I would: —
Amid the gathered folk,
This gentle Dorcas one day stood,
And heard what Jesus spoke.

"She saw the woven, seamless coat —
Half envious for his sake:
'Oh, happy hands,' she said, 'that wrought
That honored thing to make!'

"Her eyes with longing tears grow dim,
She never can come nigh
To work one service poor for him
For whom she glad would die!

"But hark! he speaks a mighty word;
She harkens now indeed!
'When did we see thee naked, Lord,
And clothed thee in thy need?

"'The king shall answer, Inasmuch
As to my brothers ye
Did it — even to the least of such —
Ye did it unto me.'

"Home, home she went, and plied the loom
And Jesus' poor arrayed.
She died — they wept about the room,
And showed the coats she made."
— *George Macdonald.*

Why was so useful a woman as Dorcas allowed to die? This question is sure to rise when any Dorcas passes away. The answer lies in the nature of God, our Father. "God loves his work better than we possibly can, and in such events has better purposes than we can possibly think." — *Burrell.* There are other worlds, in one of which Dorcas may be needed far more than in this. Besides, we are far more likely to value Dorcas when she is taken in the midst of her activity than after age has made her feeble and dependent. The death of a Dorcas is likely to raise up several other Dorcases to take her place.

Why did the friends of Dorcas send for Peter? "Outside Jerusalem three days might elapse between the death and burial, but in Jerusalem no corpse lay over night." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* Therefore they laid her in an upper chamber, "probably a large, airy hall, not unfrequently constructed upon the roof of a house and forming a sort of third story." — *Abbott.* Peter at Lydda was only about nine miles distant, less than three hours' walk; they could get him in six hours. "They would like him to be with them, to tell him all their trouble and sorrow, and pour into his sympathetic ears an eager chronicle of Dorcas's holy deeds." — *Elmslie.* Though very likely they had heard of the curing of Æneas, they seem hardly to have dared to expect the raising of Dorcas from the dead.

What plea did Dorcas's friends make when Peter came? The upper chamber was found full of widows — "the earliest trace of the institution of widows, so fully described in Paul's letters to Timothy (1 Tim. 5). They seem, at this time, to have constituted a society, which busied itself in the making of garments, probably for distribution among the poor." — *Thomas Morrison, L.L.D.* These women were weeping, and showed Peter **the coats and garments which Dorcas made.** "The former is

40. But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning *him* to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

41. And he gave her *his* hand, and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

42. And it was known throughout all Jŏp′pa; and many believed in the Lord.

43. And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Jŏp′pa with one Sī′mŏn a tanner.

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the tunic, a loose shirt extending to the knees; the latter a large, loose cloak worn by day and used as a covering by night." — *Abbott.*

Illustration and Application. "When Josephine was carried out to her grave, a great many women of pomp and pride and position went out after her; but ten thousand of the poor of France followed her coffin, weeping and wailing until the air rang again, because, when they lost Josephine, they lost their last earthly friend. Oh, who would not rather have such obsequies than all the tears that were ever poured into the lachrymals that have been exhumed from ancient cities?" — *Talmage.*

III. **DORCAS RESTORED TO LIFE**, vs. 40–43. **Why did Peter send out the mourners?** Their presence may have reminded him of the raising by Christ of the daughter of Jaïrus, at which he was present with James and John, and may have suggested the possibility that Christ through him would bring back Dorcas to life. In that case, Jesus must be imitated exactly. "Had Jesus put all the mourners from the room? Then Peter must be alone with Tabitha. Had Jesus said *Talitha cumi?* Then Peter will say *Tabitha cumi.* Had Jesus taken the maiden by the hand, and given her back again to her rejoicing friends? Then Peter will present Tabitha alive. The one point of difference I find is this: our verse tells us that Peter knelt down and *prayed.* In that one clause there lies the difference between the work of Jesus and that of his disciple. For the power of Peter was delegated power." — *Rev. G. H. Morrison.*

Illustration. "Get near Jesus Christ, and you will catch his manner. The poor bit of cloth which has held some precious piece of solid perfume will retain fragrance for many a day afterwards, and will bless the scentless air by giving it forth." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

Why did Peter speak to the corpse? To do as Christ had done, to strengthen his own faith by the spoken word; and who knows that Dorcas herself did not hear the summons? How else would we be likely to know what Peter said?

How did Peter complete the miracle? When Dorcas, in answer to his call, sat up on the bed, with his hand he lifted her to her feet, and then called the saints and widows and presented her alive to them. What joy must have taken the place of mourning in that house and throughout Joppa!

Why did not Peter in this case, as well as in the case of Æneas, give open and formal credit to Christ? Perhaps he did; we have only the outline of the event; at any rate he did later, as we know from v. 42.

Why were not James and Stephen raised from the dead, rather than this humble Dorcas? James and Stephen may have been more needed somewhere else in God's universe. They may have done their full work here. God may have wished to develop other leaders. And "possibly God meant to set a mark of honor on the love that was displayed by Dorcas. I think he would guard the church against undue estimation of preaching, apostles, miracle-working, deeds of show, gifts; and teach us that beyond all is love." — *Elmslie.*

What was the effect of the miracle? It speedily became **known throughout all Joppa**; and, being associated evidently with Jesus rather than Peter, led many to believe in the Lord. The chance for fruitful work among these converts was so great that Peter abode in Joppa for some time, showing his new breadth of view by living at the house of Simon, a tanner, whose trade was held unclean by the Jews.

What miracles like the raising of Dorcas are accomplished through Christians today? The wonders of healing wrought by modern medicine and surgery are products of our Christian civilization, and are never found where Christ has not come. But still greater wonders are accomplished by the healing of sick souls and the restoration of

those spiritually dead accomplished by our pastors, rescue missionaries, and the laborers on the home and foreign mission fields. "Jesus is just as near now as he was then. He can hear you and me just as well as he could Peter. He has just as much interest in people now as he had then. He does not help them in the same way, but he will help them just as much. Jesus has done so much in the world, we do not need any more miracles to show us that he is able to save men, and give them eternal life. He does not need to raise people from the grave any more, to show us that he is able to help men after death and bring them to heaven. We all know very well that if we trust him he will save us." — *Rev. Richard Cordley.*

"And Dorcas in her daughters lives
Industrious and kind;
For help her good example gives
To willing hand and mind.
Lord, in our hearts her spirit stir;
She followed thee; we follow her." — *Thomas Toke Lynch.*

LESSON III. — April 16.

PETER AND CORNELIUS. — Acts 10:1–23; also Acts 10:24–48.

PRINT vs. 1–16. COMMIT vs. 13–15.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *There is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him.* — Rom. 10:12.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Lesson Committee divides the story of Cornelius into two lessons, but we will here survey it in one lesson, leaving for our study next week the Lesson Committee's alternate lesson, that for Easter. The method suggested for teaching last week's lesson will apply excellently to this lesson also; or, you may ask one of the pupils to represent Peter, and tell the story of his experiences in the first person, the class filling in his omissions after he is through. In the same way another member of the class will represent Simon the tanner, and will tell the story from his view-point, always using the first person. Next some one will represent one of the Jews who went with Peter to Cæsarea; and others, in turn, will represent Cornelius, one of his servants who went to Joppa, and one of the kinsmen of Cornelius who was invited in to listen to Peter.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 13–15; Jas. 2:8, 9; Eph. 2:19, 20.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Not long after our last lesson, perhaps A.D. 37.

Place. — Peter was at Joppa, in the house of Simon the tanner. Cornelius was at Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Judea, about thirty miles north.

THE ROUND TABLE.

Cæsarea.
New Testament centurions.
Jewish exclusiveness.
Visions described in the Bible.
Prayer and its answers.
What is Christian brotherhood?

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Brotherhood Which Christianity Teaches.

I. A Heathen, Ready to Be a Christian, vs. 1–8.
II. Peter's Strange Dream Prepares Him for a Strange Errand, vs. 9–22.
III. How Cornelius Welcomed Peter, vs. 23–33.
IV. Peter's Sermon and the Glorious Result, vs. 34–48.

THE LESSON IN ART.

St. Peter in the House of Cornelius, by Doré. *Christ Giving the Keys to St. Peter*, by Perugino (Florence).

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Poems by Susan Coolidge ("The Vision and the Summons"), Newman "The Gift of Tongues"), Keble ("Monday in Easter Week," in *The Christian Year*), Longfellow ("Sandalphon"), Fanny Parnell. Krummacher's *Cornelius the Centurion.*

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Works on the Acts and on St. Peter named in the last lesson. *Studies in the Life and Character of St. Peter*, by H. A. Birks. *Sermons* by Dr. George A. Gordon (*Revelation and the Ideal*), De Witt (*Sermons on the Christian Life*), Bushnell (*Sermons on Living Subjects*), Bishop Huntington (*Christ in the Christian Year*), Munger (*The Freedom of Faith*), Phillips Brooks (*Twenty Sermons*), W. G. Horder (*The Silent Voice*), the Bishop of Derry (*Verum Crucis*), Wace (*The Gospel and Its Witnesses*), Robertson (Fifth Series), Spurgeon (Ninth and Sixteenth Series), A. T. Pierson (*The Heart of the Gospel*), Goss (*Hits and Misses*), George Dawson, Bishop Welles, William T. Wilson, Sam Jones, Maclaren, Horton, McNeill, etc. Howson's *Studies in the Life of St. Peter*. Whyte's *Bible Characters*.

1. There was a certain man in Cæsarē'a, called Cornē'lius, a centurion of the band called the Italian *band*,

2. *A* devout *man*, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

The Brotherhood Which Christianity Teaches.

INTRODUCTION. "The main purpose of the Acts is to unfold the broadening spirit and form of the church of God." — *T. T. Munger.* In that purpose the chapter we are to study to-day has preëminence. "The chasm between the blacks and the whites in this country is as nothing compared with that between Jew and Greek. The revolution that brought them together was bloodless, but history cannot point to a greater." — *Prof. J. M. Stifler, D.D.* "Great issues are frequently fought out on very narrow fields. In the conversion of Cornelius we see foreshadowed the conversion of Constantine in the nearer future, and the conversion of India in the remoter future still to come." — *Rev. H. A. Birks.*

I. **A HEATHEN, READY TO BE A CHRISTIAN**, vs. 1–8. Cæsarea, at the northern end of the Plain of Sharon, was about thirty miles north of Joppa, and about seventy miles from Jerusalem. It was the political capital of Judea. Here Herod the Great had built a splendid city, with a large artificial harbor, and here lived, at least in the summer, the governors or procurators of the Roman province, Pontius Pilate, Felix, and Festus. "Broad quays, fine bazars for trade, noble public buildings, commodious streets, lofty barracks for sailors, and a palace used by the procurators; a huge open-air theatre on the hills north of the city, and a circus a thousand feet long in its ellipse on the east of the town; the whole adorned with many statues and lavish ornamentation, — showed what despotic power could do, in the hands of a strong intellect and splendid energy." — *Geikie.* "It was the great Gentile city of Palestine, and in the sections of the Acts which treat of the transition from Jewish to Gentile Christianity it was natural that Cæsarea and not Jerusalem should be the centre of Christian activity." — *Prof. Thomas M. Lindsay.*

1. **Cornelius.** 1. He was a *Roman*, perhaps a member of the famous Cornelian Gens. "The great Scipio, the Wellington of Roman history, was a Cornelius. The mother of the two great agrarian reformers, Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, was named Cornelia; and the powerful Sulla, the great reviver of aristocratic privilege at Rome, boasted the same proud name." — *Birks.* This centurion, however, may not have been of noble birth, for Sulla had given the Roman franchise to ten thousand slaves, and called them all "Cornelii" after his own name.

2. He was a *centurion*, corresponding to our captain. The word means commander of a hundred men. A Roman legion, 6000 strong when full, was divided into ten cohorts, each cohort into three maniples, and each maniple into two centuries.

3. He belonged to **the Italian band**, or cohort, so called because made up of Romans born in Italy. "An epitaph, about A.D. 70, found at Carnuntum on the Danube, commemorates one Proculus, a soldier of the Second Italian Cohort, engaged on detached service from the Syrian army. Thus there may well have been an Italian cohort in Syria thirty years earlier." — *Dean Furneaux.*

4. He was **a devout man, and one that feared God.** "In an army, when a soldier is religious, his religion must be thorough." — *Rackham.* He may have heard of Christ from Philip, who had evangelized that region. "He was one of the sort of men Dean Farrar has called 'seekers after God'; men like Socrates, Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius." — *Burrell.* "At that time the desire had been awakened in many

3. He saw in a vision evidently, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Côrnē'lius.

4. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

5. And now send men to Jŏp'pa, and call for *one* Sī'mon, whose surname is Peter:

6. He lodgeth with one Sī'mon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

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heathen to find a way by which they could serve the only true God, without formally connecting themselves with Israel or accepting the law." — *Professor Weiss.* A good character is given to all five of the New Testament centurions.

5. He was a good husband and father, and led **all his house** in his own righteous ways.

6. He was practical in his religion, and **gave much alms to the people**, both Jews and Gentiles.

7. Finally, as the source of it all, he **prayed to God alway.** He lived up to the light he had, but he constantly sought more light.

8. And as a result of all this, he was honored by all the Jews (v. 22), and, we may be sure, by the Romans also. God leads men on by easy ways, and in breaking down Jewish prejudices he presented to them first a Gentile to whom they could hardly take exception.

3. He saw in a vision, but not a trance or dream. **Evidently**, R. V. *openly*, plainly, without illusion. **About the ninth hour of the day**, three o'clock in the afternoon, the Roman day beginning at six A.M. Cornelius was observing in his house the Jewish hour of evening prayer (v. 30), preceded by a fast. Thus in open daylight he saw **an angel**, looking like a man but in dazzling raiment (v. 30).

The Angel and Cornelius. G. Paglieì.

4. He was afraid, as even the holiest persons are likely to be when suddenly confronted by supernatural beings. But the angel gently reassured him, telling him that his prayers and alms had been accepted by God as **a memorial**, that is, a "remembrance offering." "The constant prayer of the Jews was, 'Remember me, O God.' This name of *memorial* had been given to that part of the meal offering — the handful of flour with oil and incense — which the priest burned upon the altar and which ascended unto the Lord as a sweet savor." — *Rackham.* Malachi (3 : 16) speaks of the Lord's "book of remembrance."

Our Memorials. "Who of earth can tell the course of prayer? In silence and alone, some earnest heart may turn to God, a prostrate penitent beseeching pardon for the past and heavenly grace, a parent praying for an erring child, a sister for a wayward brother, a Christian soldier for the household of the faith, and not a *word* is *lost!*" — *Bishop Welles.*

5. Now send men to Joppa. They were to find Simon surnamed Peter, thus to be distinguished from Simon the tanner with whom he lodged. The tanner lived **by the**

7. And when the angel which spake unto Côrnē'lius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually;

8. And when he had declared all *these* things unto them, he sent them to Jŏp'pa.

9. On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:

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seaside, "perhaps to secure water for the purpose of his trade, perhaps because it seems that a tanner was not allowed to carry on his business unless outside the walls of a town at a distance of fifty cubits." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* It was considered an unclean occupation, and "this fact might reassure Cornelius by showing that Peter was not a narrow illiberal Jew, but one who had learned that what defiled a man was not his occupation but his thoughts." — *Dean Furneaux.* Peter may have lodged there in order to engage in his old business of fishing. William C. Prime, visiting Joppa, found two tanneries on the seashore about one-fourth of a mile from the city, the tanners soaking their hides on the rocks in shallow water.

Men Must Finish Angels' Work. Peter could do more for Cornelius than the angel could. "However poor a preacher, I can preach the gospel better than Gabriel can, because Gabriel cannot say what I can say, 'I am a sinner saved by grace.'" — *Arthur T. Pierson.*

From a photograph by Bonfils.

House of Simon the Tanner, Joppa.

7. Promptly and joyfully, Cornelius sent to Joppa **two of his household servants**, and, to guard them, **a devout soldier** from his bodyguard, first telling them **all these things**. "A devout centurion has devout soldiers, and a master who speaks to his servants about religious subjects will be well served." — *Professor Lindsay.*

II. **PETER'S STRANGE DREAM PREPARES HIM FOR A STRANGE ERRAND**, vs. 9–22. "God designing to send one of his servants on a special mission, first prepares and instructs his mind for a work to which otherwise he might have felt repugnance. It was so with Philip and the Ethiopian, it was so with Ananias and Saul, it is so again with Peter and Cornelius." — *Dean C. J. Vaughan.* "God, as it were, lays his right hand on Cornelius, and his left on Peter, and impels them towards each other." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

9. **On the morrow.** The messengers had started after three P.M., had spent the night at some town on the way, and were approaching Joppa late in the afternoon of the second day, having walked thirty miles. In the meantime, **about the sixth hour** (noon, one of the three regular times of prayer for the Jews), Peter had gone **up upon the housetop to pray.** "With the flat roofs of Eastern houses, to which access could be obtained from outside without passing through the rooms of the building, the housetop formed a convenient place for retirement." — *Cambridge Bible.* It was surrounded by a parapet three or four feet high, which would screen Peter as he knelt.

10. And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,

11. And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:

12. Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

13. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

14. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

15. And the voice *spake* unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common.

16. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

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10. **And he became very hungry**, for he "probably had not yet broken his fast." — *Rackham.* While they were preparing the food below, the old man **fell into a trance**. The Greek word is the same as our English ecstasy, and signifies "a state of transport, in which one is not conscious of the body (see 2 Cor. 12 : 2), and in which the mind is peculiarly open to heavenly communications." — *Gilbert.*

The Vision. Peter saw **a great sheet**, "like the wind-stretched canvas of the craft on the Lake of Galilee." — *Lumby.* It was let down by the four corners (Luke here uses a technical medical term meaning the ends of a bandage), and it was filled with many kinds of beasts, serpents, and birds — those considered clean by the Jews and those held to be unclean. "The clean would have been polluted by contact with the unclean, so that all would have been alike polluted." — *Abbott.*

The Vision of Peter. Julius von Schnorr.

The Interpretation. **13. Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.** "Had not Daniel fed on pulse and water rather than defile himself (Dan. 1 : 8, 12)? Had not Eleazar died rather than eat unclean food (2 Macc. 6 : 18)? And yet Peter had been taught long before that meats do not defile (Mark 7 : 15)." — *Lindsay.* "It must be remembered that the Jew felt, by long heredity, a physical repulsion from unclean meats." — *Furneaux.* **14. Not so, Lord.** Thus impulsively Peter was ever wont to argue with his Lord (see Matt. 16 : 22 ; John 13 : 8). "If Peter had said, 'Not so,' there would have been a clear consistency in his language and tone ; but 'Not so, *Lord*,' is an odd jumble of self-will and reverence, of pride and humility, of contradiction and devotion." — *Spurgeon.* Like Ezekiel under similar circumstances (Ezek. 4 : 14), Peter reminded the Lord that he had never eaten anything common or unclean. There was a gentle rebuke in the reply that God's will was fundamental in all things, and that what he had cleansed by his command to eat it could no longer be unclean or common.

16. **This was done thrice**, implying " not only that the underlying truth was important, but also that Peter was hard to convince." — *Gilbert.* Thus Christ had thrice bidden Peter, " Feed my sheep." " The vessel denotes the creation, especially mankind ; the letting down of it from heaven, the descent of all creatures from the same divine origin ; the four corners are the four quarters of the globe; the clean and unclean beasts represent the Jews and Gentiles; and the command to eat contains the divine declaration that the new creation in Christ has henceforth annulled the Mosaic laws respecting food (Lev. 10 : 10), as well as the distinction between clean and unclean nations ; and that even the heathen, therefore, were to be received into the Christian church without the intervention of Judaism; as the cloth, with all the animals, was taken up again into heaven." — *Schaff.* " The purpose of the vision, however, was not to intimate that God had abolished the distinction between food that was clean and permitted, and food that was unclean and forbidden. This distinction was founded on sound sanitary principles, suited to the climate." — *Sir William M. Ramsay.*

The Lesson for Us. " Did you ever see any of those high-minded people who look down with scorn and contempt on what they call 'the working classes,' 'the masses,' or 'the outcasts' or 'the people in the slums'? We can never preach the gospel with power until we get over the caste spirit." — *Pierson.*

" While we treat the Chinese as we do, while we make distinctions on social lines, while we turn away with revulsion from any one, even the basest, who wears the divine image, we have yet to learn what this vision means." — *J. R. Miller.*

17. **Peter doubted in himself**, R. V., " was much perplexed " as to the meaning of the vision. But he soon comprehended its import, and " no man was ever more prompt to obey when a command was understood." — *Prof. J. W. McGarvey.* " He fell asleep a sectarian. He awoke a cosmopolitan." — *Rev. Charles Frederic Goss, D.D.* His obedience to the vision was soon to be tested, for the messengers from Cornelius were even then below.

Visions and Tasks. " The vision to-day is matched by the three men waiting at the door to show us the path to service." — *Dr. George A. Gordon.* Phillips Brooks once preached a powerful sermon showing how " there is the world of truths on one side, and there is the world of men upon the other. Between the two stands man; and these two worlds, if man is what he should be, meet through his nature."

20. **Go with them, doubting nothing**, the Spirit of the vision said to Peter, who, " descending by the outside staircase from the roof, without passing through the house, met and admitted (v. 23) the men." — *Furneaux.* They confirmed the impression upon Peter's mind by reporting the vision of Cornelius, and the apostle took the first step toward fellowship with the Gentiles by lodging the messengers over night.

"Sordid the world were vision not,
But fruitless were your stay;
So, having seen the sight, and got
The message, haste away.

"Though pure and bright thy higher air,
And hot the street and dull the stair,
Still get thee down, for who shall know
But 'tis the Lord who knocks below."
— *Susan Coolidge.*

Illustration. Dr. Goss tells the story of a lady who saw a little dog run over by an automobile, and turned in horror and loathing from the mangled form. She fled into the house, but a moment later returned, took up the trembling creature, carried him in, and tenderly bathed and bound up his wounds. Then, as she looked into his grateful eyes she permitted him to kiss her cheeks, and finally pressed him to her heart! " Such was the change that took place in Peter, and when he went down to the house of the despised centurion, he saw him in a new and holy light."

III. **HOW CORNELIUS WELCOMED PETER**, vs. 23–33. Peter was usually headstrong, but on this important occasion he was very cautious. 23. **Certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.** We learn from v. 45 that they were Jews, and from Acts 11 : 12 that they were six in number. Peter took them for witnesses, since he foresaw that he would be severely criticized for his act, as afterwards happened. The ten men probably travelled along the road that extended close along the seashore (Edersheim, *Jewish Social Life*, chapter 4), and they spent a night on the way.

24. On **the morrow . . . Cornelius waited for them**, with **kinsmen and friends** probably to a number greater than the 120 who met in the " one place " at the first Pentecost (Stifler).

25. **Cornelius . . . fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.** " That a Roman centurion should have prostrated himself at the feet of a Jewish fisherman, is an evidence of his earnestness, and his appreciation of divine things." — *Abbott.* But Peter

promptly protested, like Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, lest Cornelius might have false ideas regarding him, and also fearing the effect on the spectators.

28. It is an unlawful thing. Peter would have his hearers realize the importance of the step he was taking. "No pious Jew would of course have sat down at the table of a Gentile. If a heathen were invited to a Jewish house, he might not be left alone in the room, else every article of food or drink on the table was henceforth to be regarded as unclean. If cooking utensils were bought of them, they had to be purified by fire or water; knives to be ground anew, spits to be made red-hot before use, etc." — *Edersheim.* "This rule was very hard upon Jews who travelled in foreign countries. If they were anxious to be exact in the observance of the Law, they had to restrict themselves to a diet of fruit and vegetables." — *Prof. H. T. Andrews.* "So to-day, in India, the Hindoo deals with the English in business affairs, but rarely admits him to his house, or to any social fellowship." — *Abbott.*

30. Cornelius then tells Peter "that at the present hour (three in the afternoon) he had for four days been engaged in prayer, because at that time an angel had assured him that his prayer would be heard." — *Weiss.*

Illustration. The well-known story of the rare tree in the Jardin des Plantes, in Paris, which year after year bore blossoms but no fruit; until one year fruit also was brought forth. They sought the reason and discovered a tree of the same kind at a great distance, which at that season had blossomed, and the fructifying pollen had been carried by the wind or insects to the tree in Paris. Such were the complementary experiences of Peter and Cornelius.

33. Now therefore, said Cornelius in conclusion, **are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.** A good recipe for all that listen to sermons and for all that preach. "Eloquence is the pouring back on the audience in a flood what the speaker first gets from the audience in vapor." — *Gladstone.* "The thought of God's presence puts us in our right place as regards our neighbor and our minister, and the minister in the right place as regards the audience." — *Rev. John McNeill.* "As the summer sun draws from the plant the buds and flowers, so the sympathy and prayer of a congregation bring out all that is best of the heart and the mind of its pastor." — *Rev. Hugh C. Wallace.*

IV. **PETER'S SERMON AND THE GLORIOUS RESULT,** vs. 34–48. **34. God is no respecter of persons.** In magnificent words Peter leaps to the heart of the matter. "Never were words more noble uttered." — *Farrar.* "This is the most grandly catholic platform of salvation," says Bushnell, in his sermon on "The Outside Saints." "This declaration is an affirmation of the absolute fairness and impartiality of God." — *Rev. William T. Wilson.* "Scarcely yet, Christian as we claim to be, has the idea of the brotherhood of nations in one family and church of God entered into the statesmanship, much less into the politics and legislation, of even civilized man." — *Bishop Huntington.* "We see only the persons, the parts that are played; God sees the man, the woman, behind the parts. St. Francis of Assisi well says, 'What every man is in the eyes of God, that he is, and no more.'" — *W. Garrett Horder.*

Illustrations. "The most of us require an orchestra of sixty pieces to awaken our musical sensibilities; but hand a printed score to men like Seidl and Thomas, and those black (and to us illegible) ink marks will stir them to raptures and to tears!" — *Goss.* So God can read the beauty that we cannot see in human characters.

Ruskin, in his *Modern Painters*, points out that the clay, soot, sand, and water which make ordinary mud are elements which under other circumstances become forms of the rarest loveliness: the clay, crystallized, is a sapphire; the sand may be an opal; the soot, a diamond; and the water, a snow-star.

35. In every nation he that worketh righteousness is accepted. "This great saying is twisted from its right meaning when it is interpreted as discouraging the efforts of Christians to carry the gospel to the heathen; for, if 'the light of nature' is sufficient, what was Peter sent to Cæsarea for?" — *Alexander Maclaren.* "We should remember that Professor Max Müller, the founder of the study of comparative religion, was a Christian who was a more earnest and devoted Christian for the fuller knowledge of the religions of the world." — *Rev. R. F. Horton, D.D.*

38. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth. Peter's hearers were in no danger of leaving out Jesus Christ. In words strikingly like his own Pentecost sermon and Paul's later sermon on Mars' Hill, "Peter goes straight to his business; there is no beating about the bush." — *Spurgeon.* The essence of the gospel, according to these pointed sentences, is "the supernatural character of Jesus Christ, his miraculous powers, his authority to forgive sins, his commission to judge the quick and the dead." — *Wace.*

" 'God anointed Jesus Christ with the Holy Ghost and with power' (there is all the momentum of it); 'he went about doing good' (there is all the activity of it); 'healing all that were oppressed of the devil' (there is all the tenderness of it); 'for God was with him' (understand it rightly, rise with the words — and there is all the theology of it)." — *Bishop of Derry.* The first and third of these quotations, as the same writer shows, summarize Luke's Gospel; the second, Mark's; the fourth, John's; and " to him give all the prophets witness " (v. 43), Matthew's. Note the number of times the word " witness " appears in this sermon. It is the personal element without which all speaking for Christ is in vain.

38. **Who went about doing good.** " Everything at Rome was on a splendid scale; but it was a world without love. There was no sort of care for widows or for orphans. There were no hospitals. There was no consideration whatever for the immense class of slaves. Cornelius knew that in his own Italy the poor, and especially the sick and hungry poor, were looked upon as incumbrances. Peter's description of our Lord's life had to him, therefore, all the charm and freshness of a great surprise." — *Condensed from Canon Liddon.*

40. **Him God raised up the third day.** " This startling claim made by St. Peter with reference to Jesus of Nazareth, with whom he had lived on terms of closest human intimacy, and in whose death he might well have seen the destruction of all his hopes, is evidence of the change which had passed over the apostle, a change which could only be accounted for by the belief that this same Jesus was risen and declared to be the Son of God with power." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.*

43. **Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.** This is one of Luther's " little gospels." " Here is embodied (1) the means, (2) the universality, (3) the condition, and (4) the nature of salvation." — *Abbott.*

44. **The Holy Ghost fell on all.** This was the Pentecost of the Gentiles. Peter's sermon, though of course we have only an abstract of it, was utterly inadequate to produce this wonderful result; it was the free gift and witnessing of God. " It will be noticed that the three outpourings of the Spirit signalize the commencement of the three stages of the progress of the gospel — Jerusalem, Samaria, the Gentile world — and that with each of them St. Peter is intimately connected." — *F. H. Chase.*

45. The six Jews who came with Peter **were astonished** (R. V., " amazed "). It was they, undoubtedly, who baptized the Gentile converts at the command of Peter; and when the church at Jerusalem questioned Peter's act, they were with the apostle to justify him (Acts 11 : 12).

48. **He commanded them to be baptized.** Though the Spirit had already received them into the church by visible tokens, the express command of the Lord requiring baptism must be obeyed.

The Great Lesson of These Events for us is that we are to regard all men as our brothers, and seek to win them for our Saviour and theirs. " Thus the infant church, under the guidance of its Lord, took a new departure, and entered upon that world-wide mission in which it is still engaged. At Cæsarea, first, its preachers found out fully that its field was the world." — *William M. Taylor.*

"There is no soul too wrecked to bless,
No hand too foul to press,
No groveling wretch too loathsome for our love;
No tainted touch he fears
Who still, like Peter, hears
The Crucified, low whispering from above:
'God, who all secret things hath seen,
Calls naught that liveth common or unclean.' " — *Fanny Parnell.*

LESSON IV. — April 23.

EASTER LESSON. — THE RISEN CHRIST. — 1 Cor. 15: 1–28.

PRINT vs. 1–11. COMMIT vs. 3, 4.

GOLDEN TEXT. — ***Now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep.*** — 1 Cor. 15: 20.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The main purpose of this lesson is to fix in your pupils' minds the evidences of Christ's resurrection so firmly that ever afterward they will have no doubt of that great and fundamental fact. To that end give them pencils and paper and ask them to make notes, during the recitation, of all the arguments for the resurrection of Christ that are given or suggested. At the close of the recitation review these arguments, and see that each pupil completes his list of them for a similar review next Sunday; perhaps a written examination on the subject.

THE ROUND TABLE.

The eleven appearances of the risen Christ.
Proofs that Christ really rose from the dead.
Proofs that Christ's resurrection involves our immortality.
How we should live, since we are immortal.
"The Power of His Resurrection."

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul wrote this first letter to the Corinthians A.D. 56 or 57.

Place. — Paul wrote from Ephesus, being moved to write by learning about misconduct in the Corinthian church.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Among Wilde's Bible pictures are 27 reproductions of famous and beautiful paintings dealing with the resurrection and appearances of Christ, the most impressive being *Easter Morning*, by Hofmann; *The Risen Lord and Mary Magdalene*, by Plockhörst; *The Walk to Emmaus*, by Plockhörst; *Thomas the Doubter*, by Guercino; *The Appearance of Christ to St. Peter*, by Cigoli; *First Easter Dawn*, by Thomson; *The Ascension*, by Hofmann, Rembrandt, Mengs.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 3, 4; John 11:25, 26; Hos. 13:14.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Risen Christ Is the Proof of Our Immortality.

I. The Triumphant Fact of Christ's Resurrection, vs. 1–4.
II. The Witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, vs. 5–11.
III. How Christ's Resurrection Involves Our Immortality, vs. 12–28.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on First Corinthians, especially Stanley's and others named below. Chapters in *Through Death to Life*, by Reuen Thomas, D.D.; *Facts That Call for Faith*, by David Gregg, D.D.; *The Epistle of James*, by Dale; *The Sunday Round*, by Baring-Gould; Knox Little's *The Mystery of the Passion;* Watkinson's *The Bane and the Antidote;* Lyman Abbott's *The Life That Really Is;* Stuart's *Children of God;* Lilienthal's *Some Actors in Our Lord's Passion;* Maclaren's *Expositions; Elims of Life*, by Rev. J. D. Jones; Dawson's *The Authentic Gospel;* Taylor's *The Boy Jesus;* Dr. G. A. Gordon's *Through Man to God. Sermons* by Bishop Matthew Simpson, Beecher, Jefferson, Moody, Newman, Maurice (*Sermons Preached in Country Churches*), Bushnell (*Sermons on Living Subjects* and *Christ and His Salvation*), Sydney Smith, Jeremy Taylor, Payson, Robertson (Fourth Series), Bishop Welles, Hepworth, Douglas, Phillips Brooks (*The Light of the World*), Dean Alford, Canon Holland, Dean Vaughan, Dean Liddon, and many others.

The Risen Christ Is the Proof of Our Immortality.

THE GREAT QUESTION. The most important question for each one of us is this, "Is there a life after death?" Men have tried to prove immortality by philosophical reasonings, arguing from the universal instinctive belief in it, from the incompleteness of this life needing another life to round it out, and so on. To-day we go to headquarters and get the only positive proof of our immortality that has ever been given, because no one but Christ has come out of this next life to testify of it to us. Thus Easter is to a Christian the greatest of festivals.

This fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians is one of the supreme chapters of the Bible. "There is no other passage of the New Testament which treats of the Christian doctrine of the resurrection with such force and fulness. . . . It was very probably the *first* written account we have of the resurrection of Christ." — *Cambridge Bible.* "It contains the earliest known specimen of what may be called the creed of the early church." — *Dean Stanley.* It was written to refute the statements of some of the members of the Corinthian church, who denied, not that Christ rose from the dead, but that men are immortal. Paul's purpose is to prove that our immortality is involved in Christ's.

1. Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

2. By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

3. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

I. **THE TRIUMPHANT FACT OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION**, vs. 1-4. The first step of the argument is to prove that the Saviour did really rise from the dead, and first Paul states his thesis with all possible emphasis. 1. **I declare unto you the gospel.** "Gospel" means literally "God-story," and translates the Greek word which is the same as our "evangel," and which means, literally, "good news." **Wherein ye stand.** "There must be perseverance in the receiver of this truth." — *Dean Vaughan.*

"The Garden Tomb," outside Jerusalem, near the hill believed by many to be the place of the crucifixion.

Illustration. "I remember seeing a poor gentleman wheeled about, who, unless strapped up, fell into a lump in his chair. All his bones were being resolved into jelly. A doctor took him in hand, and said, 'You want lime, sir, lime.' And he gave him lime water for baths, and lime water to drink as he could bear it. By degrees his back stiffened, his limbs became strong, his head erect, and he was once more well — a man, not a gelatinous lump." — *S. Baring-Gould.* The lime for Christians is the strong doctrines of Christianity, such as this of the resurrection, wherein we are to stand upright.

2. **Unless ye have believed in vain.** However sincerely the Corinthian Christians might believe in the resurrection, it would be vain (empty) belief unless it were true. Paul wanted truth as well as sincerity, and so he went on to the proof of immortality.

3. **For I delivered unto you first of all.** "The 'first' points not only to the order of time in the proclamation, but to the order of importance as well." — *Alexander Maclaren.* **That which I also received.** Paul received the resurrection truth from many witness, whom he proceeds to enumerate; it was far from being a matter of his own invention.

Christ died for our sins. "'Christ died for *my* sins' — that's the way to put it, 'for *my* sins.'" — *D. L. Moody.* "Any conception of the death of Christ that makes this remarkable form of expression unnatural — any explanation of it which practically explains it away — impairs the whole structure of the Christian faith, and weakens the central forces of the Christian life. . . . Who else has died, or could die, for your sins and mine?" — *R. W. Dale.* "No one can read the New Testament with-

4. And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

5. And that he was seen of Cē′phas, then of the twelve:

out seeing that its central and most conspicuous fact is the death of Jesus. Take the Gospels, and you will find that over one-quarter of their pages are devoted to the story of his death. Very strange is this indeed, if Jesus was nothing but an illustrious teacher. Or take the letters which make up the last half of the New Testament; in these letters there is scarcely a quotation from the lips of Jesus. The letters seem to ignore that he was a teacher or reformer, but every letter is soaked in the pathos of his death." — *Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.*

Illustrations. If a father plunges into the flames of a burning building and rescues his children at the risk of his own life, he proves his love for them. But imagine a fire in one part of London, and a father who brings his children to see it. The father plunges into the burning house, passes from attic to cellar, and emerges scorched and half dead, exclaiming, "There, children, is a manifestation of your father's love!" That would be the act of a madman, but no more strange than for Christ to die upon the cross if his death had no result in obtaining our salvation from sin. — *Condensed from Rev. E. A. Stuart.*

"The Moravian missionaries toiled for years in Greenland teaching the natives about the creation and the fall, the flood and the dispersion, and so on, and all to no purpose. But one day John Beck read to a small company of them the old story of Christ's dying love. And one of them, Kayamak, with tears streaming down his face, said to him, 'Tell it me once more, for I too would be saved.' At last they had found the key to the Greenlanders' hearts." — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

"O death of Christ, the death of death to me!"

According to the scriptures, especially Isa. 53 : 5–10. Christ's death was not an accident, but part of the age-long plan of the Son of God.

4. And that he was buried. This statement is important. Christ was buried in a conspicuous grave, near the city. If he had not risen, it would have been easy for the foes of Christianity to produce his body and thus refute the claims of a resurrection; but they did not do this, because they could not.

Illustration. "Suppose, after the execution of King Charles I., in some corner of the country a Pretender had sprung up and said, 'I am the King!' the way to end that would have been for the Puritan leaders to have taken people to St. George's Chapel, and said, 'Look! there is the coffin, there is the body; is that the king, or is it not?'" — *Alexander Maclaren.*

And that he rose again the third day. This earliest extant account of the resurrection of Christ was written about twenty-five years after the event, when scores of eye-witnesses of the fact were still living. "Jesus Christ has risen from the dead; and that opens a door wide enough to admit all the rest of the gospel miracles." — *Maclaren.*

According to the scriptures. Such passages as Ps. 2 : 7; 16 : 10; Isa. 55 : 3; Hos. 6 : 2. See Acts 13 : 33–35. "It had been predicted that he should not stay in the grave, and when he arose it put the seal to the Old Testament as the Word of God." — *Bishop Matthew Simpson.*

General Proofs of the Resurrection. The incredulity of the disciples at first, so frankly recorded. The many touches in the simple Gospel narratives that attest their truth, such as the statement that the risen Lord appeared first to a woman, when a false narrative would certainly make him appear first to John, or the Sanhedrin, or Pilate, or some other important person. The change in the apostles' attitude, from despair to the most confident courage. The winning of the persecutor Saul. The many eye-witnesses of the resurrection. Paul goes on to elaborate this last proof.

II. **THE WITNESSES OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION**, vs. 5–11. Paul does not mention the very first persons to whom our Lord appeared after his resurrection, Mary Magdalene and the other women. Probably he had not met them, and is naming only those witnesses with whom he had himself talked, or at least with some of each group.

5. He was seen of Cephas, Simon Peter. This appearance is only indirectly mentioned in the Gospels, in the account of the return from Emmaus, Luke 24 : 34. "The prominence thus given to Peter agrees with that assigned him generally in the Gospel narrative." — *Dean Stanley.* **Then of the twelve apostles.** More exactly first of the

6. After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

7. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

8. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

9. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

10. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

11. Therefore whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believe.

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ten, Judas being dead and Thomas absent; later, of these and Thomas. The appearance at Emmaus is here omitted.

6. **He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.** "There is no other record of this appearance. Perhaps the word 'brethren' of Matt. 28 : 10 (not elsewhere applied to the Twelve) has there a wide signification, and possibly those who 'doubted' (Matt. 28 : 17) belonged to the five hundred." — *New Century Bible.* "Half a thousand witnesses are enough to establish any cause." — *Rev. David Gregg, D.D.* **Of whom the greater part remain unto this present**, twenty-five years after the event.

7. **After that, he was seen of James.** Probably James the Lord's brother, who became the honored head of the church in Jerusalem. This appearance is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament, but is described in the "Gospel of the Hebrews," which was written (Hastings) only a little later than our four Gospels. **Then of all the apostles.** "A larger circle than 'the twelve' (v. 5), including all present at the final Commission (Luke 24 : 48; Acts 1 : 6–8)." — *Temple Bible.* Here is included the appearance in the morning by the Sea of Galilee.

8. **And last of all he was seen of me also**, on the road to Damascus. "One sight of that divine countenance, so tender, so loving, so majestic, so calm, was enough, first to convert him, then to support him on his way." — *John Henry Newman.* **As of one born out of due time.** "Like an untimely birth he was imperfectly developed and unworthy of the name of a child." — *New Century Bible.*

9. **The least of the apostles.** "All through his days there was one sad vision before him: he saw Stephen kneeling outside the gate at Jerusalem, he saw him as the stones fell upon him one after the other; he realized the prominent part that he had had in bringing about the death of the first martyr of the church of Jesus Christ; and although God had forgiven him, and he knew it, still one life-long sorrow and regret took possession of his being, for misused influence and for wasted years." — *Canon Body.*

10. **By the grace of God I am what I am.** "No physician is so sure of a specific, no scientist so sure of a law, no mathematician so sure of an axiom, as we are that Christ Jesus can save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him." — *Rev. W. L. Watkinson, D.D.* "If one page of our life has been blotted, let us write upon the next page a legend so sweet, a story so true, that we may at times forget the dark things in the joy of the latter time." — *Rev. George Dawson.*

A Throng of Witnesses. "Every piece of Scripture recognizes the resurrection; every epistle of every apostle; every author contemporary with the apostles; of the age immediately succeeding the apostles." — *Sydney Smith.*

"If on grounds of historic evidence we have any security that Cæsar Augustus or Pontius Pilate lived, we have vastly more security that Jesus Christ both lived and rose again. For human history is a matter of documents and manuscripts, of monuments and institutions; and there is actually to-day more extant evidence of that kind open to scholars and antiquarians in favor of the Gospel story of the life and death and resurrection of the Man Christ Jesus than exists for the accredited history of any of Christ's contemporaries." — *Rev. George William Douglas, S. T. D.*

"The old argument against miracles used to say that it is more consonant with experience that testimony should be false, than that a miracle should be true. I venture to say it is a much greater strain on a man's credulity to believe that *such* evidence is false than that *such* a miracle, *so* attested, is true." — *Alexander Maclaren.*

III. **HOW CHRIST'S RESURRECTION INVOLVES OUR IMMORTALITY**, vs. 12–28. The Corinthian Christians did not deny Christ's immortality, proved by his

resurrection; but they seemed to argue that Christ was divine and they were human. *He*, of course, could not be held by the grave; but why should not the grave have power to hold forever a mere man? Paul now passes to this fundamental point in the discussion, and we can trace four steps in his argument.

First Step in the Argument. Christ's resurrection proves the possibility of a resurrection from the dead, if only of Jesus Christ. **13. If there be no resurrection of the dead.** This was the teaching of the Epicureans among the heathen and the Sadducees among the Jews. The Stoics taught that human souls would be ultimately reabsorbed in God, thus losing their personality. The disciples of Plato held to personal immortality, but denied so material a doctrine as the resurrection of the body, however glorified. **Then is Christ not risen.** If you believe that, "you are driven to the supposition that, when the Son of Man said upon the cross, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,' God's reply to that prayer was, 'Annihilation!' There may be some who can entertain such belief, but the credulity which receives the most monstrous superstition is infinitely less than theirs." — *F. W. Robertson.* "What an appalling mystery life would be if the Creator, whom we call Father, should evolve into being such a soul as that of Jesus, simply to dash it into nothingness!" — *Reuen Thomas.*

14. Your faith is also vain. "There is no person for faith to cling to if Jesus be not raised." — *Thomas.*

15. And we, Paul and John and James and Peter and the other apostles who were hazarding their lives for this truth, toiling and suffering for it, **are found false witnesses of God.** How impossible is deceit for men of such character! And what possible motive for it?

17. Ye are yet in your sins. "A dead Christ means dead Christians, and makes deluded Christians." — *Maclaren.*

18. They also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. Our heaviest sorrow is not as we face death for ourselves, but at the graves of our dear ones.

Second Step in the Argument. The Christian is "in Christ." Note how often Paul uses the phrase: vs. 18, 19, 22, 23 — "they that are Christ's." We are one with our Saviour, and so are involved in his fate. His resurrection, therefore, carries ours with it.

20. Christ is the firstfruits of them that slept (R. V., "are asleep"). On the day of our Lord's resurrection occurred in the temple the annual ceremony of waving before the Lord the first sheaf of the barley harvest, in grateful dedication of the whole to him. "As truly as the first ears of ripened grain are not alone, but are a sample of innumerable multitudes which are to follow, so truly our risen Saviour is but what his people shall be." — *Alford.*

Third Step in the Argument. Christ is the ideal man, the second Adam of the human race. Through him divine life was implanted in man the second time, as through Adam the first time. The first Adam introduced death; the second Adam, eternal life.

21. By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. "The apostle assumes that, in this Jesus of Nazareth, there is the same humanity as ourselves. He is not something different from ourselves, only something more. Our nature is in him, and so our destiny is in him." — *Reuen Thomas.* "Observe the beautiful delicacy of God in his plan of salvation. He is not willing to make it a salvation *for* man only, but contrives to make it also, as far as possible, a salvation *by* man." — *Horace Bushnell.*

22. In Adam all die. "In the possession of a common nature with Adam all mankind are liable to death." — *Cambridge Bible.*

Illustrations. "Why was the soul made so large, if this life is all? If you were told that Niagara was made to drive the farmer's grist-mill for a single day and nothing more, you could not believe it. If you were told that a Corliss engine was invented to move the machinery which makes a single pin, and after that is of no further use, what would you say? Can it, then, be true that the soul of man will live just long enough to find out that it can do something, and then be told that it shall never have an opportunity to do this something?" — *George H. Hepworth.*

So in Christ shall all be made alive, sharing his nature and therefore his eternal existence. "'All' — that is, all Christians, all that are 'in him'; for the apostle is speaking only of such here." — *Rev. W. Lindsay Alexander.* "So far as we are in Adam we die; so far as we are in Christ we live." — *Thomas.*

Illustration. "'I will show you all the glory of Greece,' said an ancient to his friend, and so saying he took him to Solon the Spartan lawgiver. 'And is this all?

asked his friend. ' Yes, this is all,' replied the ancient. ' When thou hast seen Solon, thou hast seen all.' Solon made Greece. What he thought, Greece became. He was the typical Grecian. Christ is the typical Christian. He carries in him our all : our present and our future." — *Rev. David Gregg, D.D.*

Fourth Step in the Argument. If man were not immortal, there would be a power in the universe, death, over which God would not hold sway. Failure of man's resurrection would be a deduction from God's sovereignty. If our Lord conquered death merely for himself, it would be no real conquest. He could not reign if death governed and held his subjects. Not thus could he give a redeemed world to his Father.

24. He shall have put down all rule, such as that of sin and death, which conflicts with his own rule.

Illustration. " Jupiter is represented by an old classic writer as saying to the lesser gods that if all of them combined together and should endeavor to throw down his throne — if all power was arrayed against him — he, by his own might, would be able to overcome them all. What was fiction with the ancients becomes gloriously realized in Christ." — *Bishop Matthew Simpson.*

26. The last enemy. " Death shall be the last of all, because (Rom. 6 : 23) it is the ' wages of sin,' and must continue to exist until sin has come to an end." — *Cambridge Bible.*

28. Then shall the Son also himself be subject. " The passage suggests to us the idea of a prince, the heir-apparent of the kingdom, going out to war, and bringing the spoils and trophies of his conquest to his father's feet. Such an idea must have recurred with fresh vividness to the minds of the early Christians a few years afterwards, when they saw Titus bringing the spoils of the Holy City to his father Vespasian." — *Cambridge Bible.*

That God may be all in all. " All relations in all creations." — *Evans.* " Paul's heart's desire is that God may be all in all in his own soul, that he may be all in all in the souls of all men, that he may be all in all in the whole rational universe. A vaster or higher aspiration there could not be. It is the vision of all sin, wrong, error, infirmity, woe, forever lifted and banished from the universe." — *Rev. George A. Gordon, D.D.* This is the " far off, divine event to which the whole creation moves."

Illustration. An Eastern parable: " One knocked at the door of the Beloved, and a voice from within said, ' Who is there ? ' Then he answered, ' It is I.' The voice replied, ' This house will not hold *me* and *thee* ! ' So the door remained shut. The lover retired to a wilderness, and spent some time in solitude, fasting, and prayer. One year elapsed, when he again returned, and knocked at the door. ' Who is there ? ' said the voice. The lover answered, ' It is *thou*.' Then the door opened."

Living in the Light of Immortality. " When there looms before our sight a vision of ourselves as we shall be in that other world ; when we see that that which prevailed in us here, whether it be good or evil, shall prevail yet more, shall develop infinitely into boundless issues there; what can this thought of our immortality do but make our life more earnest, our repentance more sincere, our watchfulness more constant, our thoughts more pure ? " — *Dean of St. Asaph.*

" Then rejoice in God. Dry up those tears. Cast away that downcast look. Child of the dust, you are an heir of glory. There is a crown all burnished for you; there is a mansion all ready for you; there is a white robe prepared for you; there is eternal glory for you; angels are to be your servants and you are to reign with the King of kings forever. But while you wait on earth, be witnesses for God; attest the glory of your master; rise in the greatness of his strength; bind sin captive to your chariot wheels; go onward in your heavenly career, and be as pure as your ascended Head is pure. Be active in works of mercy; be angels of light; be flames of fire ; go on your mission of mercy and convert the world unto God before you go up higher." — *Bishop Matthew Simpson.*

" As the chrysalis bursts open, and the covering which confines the perfected insect is dropped, that he may come out into brightness of form and largeness of life, so this body is but a chrysalis; and when we break through it we rise on wings by the attraction of God, and by the propulsion of our own inevitable desire and need, and are forever with the Lord." — *Henry Ward Beecher.*

"Christ is risen ! henceforth never
Death or hell shall us enthrall;
Be we Christ's, in him forever
We have triumphed over all;
"All the doubting and dejection
Of our trembling hearts have ceased.
'Tis his day of resurrection !
Let us rise and keep the feast."
— *John S. B. Monsell.*

LESSON V. — April 30.

PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON. — Acts 12:1–19.

PRINT vs. 1–11. COMMIT v. 11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* — PSALM 34:7.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

It will prove interesting if the teacher writes a series of questions covering the events and teachings of the lesson, placing each upon a strip of paper. Then let the strips be formed into links by pasting the ends together, the links being inserted the one in the next, thus forming a paper chain. This chain, representing the chains which fastened Peter, will hang before the class, and the pupils will take turns in cutting a link from the chain, reading aloud the question on it, and answering it. Of course the questions will be arranged in the proper order.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The Passover feast, April 1–8, A.D. 44.

Place. — Jerusalem: the fortress-palace of Antonia, and the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How the Lord Delivers from Danger.

I. PRISON AND PRAYER, vs. 1–5.
II. THE ANGEL OF DELIVERANCE, vs. 6–11.
III. A PRAYER-MEETING GLORIOUSLY INTERRUPTED, vs. 12–19.

THE ROUND TABLE.

The family of the Herods.
Famous prison scenes of the Bible.
Roman prisons.
The two Jameses.
Angels and their relation to men.
Remarkable deliverances of the Bible.
How God answers prayer.

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 11; Luke 21:12, 13; Isa. 42:6, 7.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

John Newton's *Olney Hymns*, CXXII. Poems by Keble (in *The Christian Year*), Mrs. Sigourney, J. S. B. Monsell, J. D. Burns. References in poems by Richard Crashaw. Whittier's "The Legend of St. Mark," and other poems about angels.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Deliverance of Peter, Raphael (Vatican); also by Hans Memling (Venice) and by Lippi (Florence); also by Murillo. The scene is depicted in a painting by Allston in the Insane Hospital at Worcester, Mass.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Volumes on Peter and the Acts already mentioned. Chapters in *The Garden of Nuts*, by Sir W. Robertson Nicoll; *The Women of the Bible*, by Margaret E. Sangster; J. R. Miller's *Devotional Hours with the Bible;* Bishop Alfred Lee's *Eventful Nights in Bible History;* Sir William M. Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church;* G. H. Morrison's *The Footsteps of the Flock; The Soul's Escape;* E. J. Hasell's *Bible Partings; Studies in the Life and Character of St. Peter*, by H. A. Birks. *Sermons* by J. M. Neale (*Sermons for Children*), John McNeill Vol. III.), H. D. Rawnsley, John Foster, etc. Especially fine treatments by Rev. Thomas J. Choate (*The Christian World Pulpit*, August 22, 1906) and Rev. J. H. Jowett (*The Silver Lining*).

How the Lord Delivers from Danger.

INTRODUCTION. In proportion as the early church was true to its mission it was sure to arouse opposition. Therefore martyrdoms were a necessity, with many sad trials. But all of these tests made the Christians stronger and the church purer, drawing them into closer fellowship with their Lord. They also gave opportunity for witness-bearing, and powerfully advertised Christianity, so that "the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church." These truths are finely illustrated in to-day's lesson.

I. **PRISON AND PRAYER**, vs. 1–5. 1. **About that time.** The time of the visit of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem, bringing help from the Antioch Christians in aid of the famine sufferers (Acts 11:27–30). **Herod the king.** This was Herod

1. Now about that time Hĕr'od the king stretched forth *his* hands to vex certain of the church.

2. And he killed Jāmes the brother of John with the sword.

3. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)

4. And when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

Agrippa I., the father of the King Agrippa II. before whom Paul afterwards made his noble defence. "This Herod was a namesake of Agrippa, the noted minister of Augustus Cæsar whose life by Tacitus is one of the noblest of Latin classics." — *Prof. J. W. McGarvey.* He reigned over all Palestine from A.D. 41 to 44, having shrewdly got into his hands the entire dominion of his grandfather, Herod the Great. He was the nephew of Herod Antipas, who murdered John the Baptist. Judæa had been governed by procurators. "There was no portion of time, for thirty years before or ever afterwards, in which there was a king at Jerusalem." — *Paley.* "Such points, underneath the main narrative, are like the water-marks in paper, telling truly the time at which the writing was penned." — *Burrell.* This Herod "was a man of address and artifice, little likely to scruple at any crime by which he might ingratiate himself with the people over which he ruled." — *Dean Vaughan.* "While he gratified the Romanized section by building theatres and holding games, he sought to conciliate the stricter faction by affecting zeal for the national faith." — *Dean Furneaux.* Following this purpose, he **stretched forth his hands to vex** (R. V., "afflict") **certain of the church.** "No doubt he had heard that the church acknowledged Jesus as King, and was afraid for his own title." — *Canon Dennis.* "Herod stretched forth his hand to vex — a mightier hand than Herod's was outstretched to help and deliver." — *Bishop Lee.*

2. **He killed James the brother of John.** James, with John and Peter, was especially favored by Christ, the three being admitted to the raising of the daughter of Jaīrus, the transfiguration, and the last scenes in Gethsemane. "Possibly his prominent position, and his characteristic nature as a son of Thunder, marked him out as an early victim." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* "It is the loftiest towers that are first struck by the lightning, and the tallest trees that feel most the fury of the blast." — *William M. Taylor.* "He was the first of the Twelve to suffer martyrdom. Remember his request (Mark 10 : 35–37). It was soon granted. Contrast his brother John's long life of waiting, the last to go (John 21 : 22, 23)." — *Rev. W. H. Griffith Thomas.*

A Glorious Death. "May we not venture to say that the man, who, at the age of fifty, died a martyr lived virtually, in the value of service, to the age of sixty or seventy?" — *John Foster.*

"A man who had been an invalid all his years was near death. A friend asked him how he was, and the answer was, 'I am almost well.'" — *J. R. Miller.*

With the sword. That is, by beheading, which would imply that he was charged with sedition, as was Christ before Pilate, rather than with breaking the Jewish law.

3. **He proceeded further to take Peter.** He did this (1) because of Peter's prominence as leader of the Twelve; (2) **because he saw it pleased the Jews**; and (3) because God intended to overrule his evil act to his own glory and the advancement of the church.

Men-pleasers. "Men who follow public opinion are like ships which are propelled by sails — going whichever way the wind blows. Those who are governed by principle are like the vessels with fire and water at their heart, which do not depend upon the winds." — *J. R. Miller.*

Then were the days of unleavened bread. "It seems not unlikely that Herod chose the Passover season that he might advertise himself as widely as possible as one zealous for the traditions of the fathers." — *Prof. G. H. Gilbert.*

4. **He put him in prison.** Probably in the famous prison in Herod's residence; the fortress or castle of Antonia. It was there that some think Christ was arraigned before Pilate, and there Paul was taken when mobbed in Jerusalem. It immediately adjoined the temple, on the northwest. **And delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers.** A quaternion was a band of four; there was a band for each of the four watches of the night. **Intending after Easter** (R. V., "the Passover") **to bring him**

5. Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

forth to the people, "in order to offer them a spectacle such as would certainly please them, in that they would see the head of the leader of the hated Christ-disciples fall." — *Weiss.* Herod, who was doing this to please the Jews, would certainly not profane their sacred festival by putting any one to death before it was ended.

THE POWER IN OPPOSITION TO HEROD. "Now what can the little company of Christians do? They have no influence with the king. No material force belongs to them. What, then, is their resource? They can pray." — *Jowett.* **5. But** — "and that is a very great *but*, indeed" (Neale) — **prayer was made without ceasing** (R. V., "earnestly") **of the church unto God for him.** Here are four qualities of true prayer illustrated:

1. *Its earnestness.* "They stormed the prison through the gates of prayer." — *Miller.*

2. *Its coöperation.* "As sheep huddled together when the wolf assails the fold, they came to their meetings in the house of Mary with beating hearts and anxious inquiries. When they met they grasped hands convulsively. To-morrow they might be parted by the river of death." — *Choate.* Thus all prayer is strengthened when "two or three meet together in His name."

3. *They prayed to God, the Almighty.* "If any of them had influence at the Court, they would have used it. If any one was acquainted with the high priest's household, he would be earnestly entreated to do what he could to bring about the release of Peter. But every door was shut in their faces; and so they knocked the more persistently at God's door." — *Choate.* "I do not suppose that there was a good swordsman among them; but that weak company had in their midst the Arm that sways the world." — *Rev. John McNeill.*

4. *They prayed for a definite purpose.* There was no aimless wandering in their prayers. They knew just what they wanted. Many prayers get nowhere because they do not start out for anywhere.

From a photograph by Bonfils.

The Castle of Antonia.

It stood on the northwest corner of the temple area, on a rock 50 cubits (75 feet) high. It had four corner towers, and a large inner space with courts and camps for soldiers. It was connected with the temple cloisters by a flight of stairs.

Illustration. "Could Herod have seen those saints upon their knees, he might have exclaimed, as did Ethelred, the Saxon king, when he saw the monks of Bangor praying against him for the success of their countrymen: '*They* have begun the fight against me. Attack *them* first.'" — *Churchill.*

MODERN PERILS AND PRAYER. Men that follow Christ faithfully are still in many perils. Missionaries confront dangers unnumbered, from savage men as well as from fevers and pestilence. Temperance reformers and crusaders against vice are often in peril of their lives. A statesman cannot be true to his convictions without making enemies. For all these the church should pray often and earnestly and definitely, as well as for the dangers of less conspicuous Christians, equally certain though not always realized. "How happy that in all extremities, and when every other expedient is precluded or unavailing, the greatest of all still remains!" — *John Foster.*

6. And when Hĕr'od would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison.

7. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon *him*, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from *his* hands.

II. **THE ANGEL OF DELIVERANCE**, vs. 6–11. Those prayers remained unanswered up to the very edge of the catastrophe. "God likes to do a near thing." — *McNeill.* God's people should be glad that he deems them worthy of being tested.

6. **When Herod would have brought** (R. V., "was about to bring") **him forth.** "There was a time when the apprehension of such a fate had struck terror into Peter's heart, and to escape it he had denied his Lord. But now he would rather die ten thousand deaths than commit such a sin." — *Bishop Lee.*

Herod's Unavailing Precautions. Peter had "broken jail" before, and Herod meant to keep him safe this time. (1) Peter was guarded by two soldiers, one on each side, like Christ between the two thieves. (2) He was bound with two chains, his left hand fastened to one soldier and his right hand to the other. (3) There were keepers (R. V., "guards") before the door of his cell. "Two of the quaternion were free to act as guards, while the remaining two were chained to the prisoner." — *Gilbert.* "Ah, but Herod made a great blunder. He left one access completely unguarded. He never thought to put a sentinel above the prison, to block the way to heaven's highest throne." — *Choate.* In addition, there were (4) the heavy doors and thick walls of the prison, and (5) the danger of apprehension in the streets, even if Peter should escape outside. Herod exulted in these securities, but God's providence delights in what seem to men to be impossibilities.

Peter was sleeping. "Perhaps he was the only Christian in the city asleep that night." — *Nicoll.* "If we could look into Herod's palace, it is not likely that he, on his soft bed, with his luxury and liberty, slept that night half so sweetly as did Peter in his prison." — *Miller.*

Illustrations. Christ asleep in the storm on the Sea of Galilee. "I heard of a man, paralyzed, who had engraved on a seal an ox standing between a plough and an altar. The inscription was, 'Ready for either.' That was how Peter felt. He could drive the gospel plough or he could die on the altar of martyrdom. When Rogers, the first martyr in the days of Queen Mary, was to be brought out to die at the stake, the jailer went into the cell and found him sleeping so heavily that with difficulty he awakened him." — *Choate.*

"Argyle's sleep, an incident in Scottish history, commemorated by art in the Legislative Hall of Westminster, shines out as a bright particular star. The deep, placid sleep of the innocent Scottish noble on the morning of his martyrdom was a better testimony to his valor than any that could have been borne on the battle-field." — *Arnot.*

"In a great freshet on the Ohio, some men in a skiff saw in the centre of the broad river, amid the wreckage of houses and fences and forests and fields, a baby's cradle floating. Rowing to it, they found the baby sleeping there as sweetly as if it had been lying in its mother's bosom. So in the wildest storms the believer may rest in the love and power of Christ." — *J. R. Miller.*

7. **The** (R. V., "an") **angel of the Lord came upon him** (R. V., "stood by him"). Dr. William M. Taylor compares the regular operation of God's laws to the postal service. We may use it to send a message, or we may adopt the more direct method of the telegraph; and we are not breaking the postal laws when we send a telegram. Neither is God breaking his own laws when he sends an angel! A **light**, evidently from the angel, **shined in the prison** (R. V., "cell"). Compare the light of the Bethlehem angel (Luke 2:9) and the shining garments of the angels at the tomb of Christ (Luke 24:4).

"Flitting, flitting, ever near thee,
Sitting, sitting, by thy side,
Angel beings guard and guide."

He smote Peter on the side, and raised him up (R. V., "awoke him"). This is a beautiful acted parable of the Christian's death.

8. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

10. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

11. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Hĕr′od, and *from* all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

"So when the Christian's eyelid droops and closes
In Nature's parting strife,
A friendly angel stands, where he reposes,
To wake him up to life."— *J. D. Burns.*

And his chains fell off from his hands. John Keble, in a beautiful poem in his *The Christian Year*, imagines Peter dreaming of his coming martyrdom, and thinking that the executioner is summoning him to it :

"The tyrant's voice
Calls to that last of glorious deeds;
But as he rises to rejoice,
Not Herod, but an angel leads." — *Keble.*

8. Gird thyself. "Omnipotence is never in a hurry." — *Maclaren.* "Gird thyself once more — not yet has the time come which the Master foretold when another shall gird thee." — *Nicoll.* See John 21:18. **Cast thy garment about thee.** "The Greek word signifies the outer dress as distinguished from the inner tunic." — *Cambridge Bible.* **Follow me.** "Chains fall off when he bids us rise and obey. Prison doors open when we follow him. Our only duty is obedient following; he does all the rest." — *Miller.*

Raphael.
Central group from "The Deliverance of St. Peter."
Fresco in the Stanza of Heliodorus, Vatican, Rome.

9. He went out. "That is, through the door that was guarded (v. 6). It seems to be implied that these obstacles to his escape were overcome in the same manner in which the chains had fallen off." — *Gilbert.* **Wist not that it was true.** "Peter's incredulity as to the occurrence witnesses to its reality." — *Burrell.*

10. When they were past the first and the second ward. The Greek word translated "ward" may mean (Vincent) "watch," soldiers on guard at the door of the cell and further on between that door and the outside door of the prison; but it is more commonly understood to mean (*Expositor's Greek Testament*) the two places where these guards were stationed. **They came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city.** "A certain monk, who had given his whole life to the redemption of captives, could never read these words without bursting into tears." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.* **Which opened to them of his own accord** (R. V., "its") **accord.** "'It is always so in dreams,' thinks Peter." — *Choate.* It was like the stone rolled away from the mouth of Christ's tomb, about the removal of which the women had been worrying. **Passed on through one street.** "The help given to Peter was abundant. He was not left at the iron door, but was conducted to a relatively safe distance." — *Gilbert.* **And forthwith** (R. V., "straight-

way") **the angel departed from him.** "One moment he is there, plainly visible, his garments flowing in the moonlight; the next moment there is empty air, black shadows, bright moonlight." — *Choate.*

11. **When Peter was come to himself**, realizing that it was reality, and not a dream. "His deliverance was in all likelihood effected during the fourth watch; that is, some time between three and six in the morning. Had it been earlier, his absence would have been noticed at the change of the watch, but it was only at *day-break* that the soldiers became aware that their prisoner had escaped." — *Thomas Morrison, L.L.D.*

The Lord . . . hath delivered me . . . from all the expectation . . . of the Jews. "No miracle more complicated or more unexpected had ever been wrought." — *Prof. J. W. McGarvey.*

How Christ Delivers To-day. "God answers our prayers whether he grants just what we ask or not." — *Burrell.* He gives the faith-filled Christian real deliverance from all foes. Sometimes it is outward escape from them; often it is the higher triumph over them, an elevation of spirit which puts our souls beyond their reach to harm. Sometimes Christ brings human helpers to our side; sometimes the helpers are mysterious and unseen agencies. The thing for the Christian to understand and remember is that *Christ always saves.*

"Thus the Lord can make a way
To bring his saints relief;
Theirs it is to wait and pray,
In spite of unbelief.

"He can break through walls of stone,
Sink the mountain to a plain;
They to whom his name is known
Can never pray in vain."

— *John Newton.*

III. **A PRAYER-MEETING GLORIOUSLY INTERRUPTED**, vs. 12–19. "When the angel left him, Peter had quickly to decide on his course of action. In a few hours the soldiers would discover his escape and start in pursuit." — *Rackham.*

12. **He came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark.** "The upper room mentioned in Acts 1:13 may have been in her house, since few of the early converts were socially in a position to own a large house. Mark may have been the man 'bearing a pitcher of water' (Luke 22:10) whom the Lord bade his disciples follow, when they went to prepare the Passover." — *Dean Furneaux.* "Mary was a near relative of Barnabas and like him probably possessing some wealth, evidently a widow whose house was a customary meeting-place for the Christians." — *Ramsay.* John Mark is the Mark "by whom, according to an old tradition, our second Gospel was written, and who in 1 Pet. 5:13 is called a spiritual son of Peter." — *Weiss.* He accompanied Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey. "This would appear to have been the house at which Peter lived when in Jerusalem." — *Davidson.* "Peter returned to the very house from which he had formerly set forth to meet his grievous fall." — *Birks.*

Where many were gathered together praying. "This was probably one of many houses in which brethren were gathered together praying on what all supposed to be the last night of Peter's life." — *McGarvey.* Barnabas and Saul may have been among the number. "It is an early instance of the Christian custom of spending the whole night in watching and prayer." — *Rackham.*

The Power of Prayer-Meetings. "If my mind can in any way influence and change the ministries of my body, why should not God's mind pervade and control and change the larger ministries of the universe? And if prayer is the communion of the human mind with the Divine mind, is it altogether incredible that by my fellowship with the Lord I can indirectly exercise the mighty prerogative of influencing the movements even of the material world? And therefore I see nothing incredible and illegitimate in praying for favorable weather. . . . It is one of the profoundest beliefs in my own life that there was a vital connection between the prayer meeting and the prison. . . . A little while ago Sir Oliver Lodge met a company of evangelical ministers, and I felt greatly humiliated that we had to receive the warning from his lips not to relinquish the boldness of our rights in the ministry of prayer!" — *Rev. J. H. Jowett.*

13. **Peter knocked at the door of the gate.** "The small outside door, forming the entrance from the street, and opening into the *pylon*, or doorway, the passage from the street into the court. Others explain it as the *wicket*, a small door in the larger one, which is less probable." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.* "Exposed as they were at any moment to the violence of their enemies, the sound might have occasioned new alarm." — *Bishop Lee.* "It is something after the fashion of those prayer meetings which used to be held in the cellar at Scrooby by the men who founded the commonwealth across the seas." — *Jowett.*

A damsel. "Her prompt recognition of Peter's voice, and her joyful haste, as well as the record of her name, indicate that she was one of the disciples gathered for prayer." — *Vincent.* **Came to hearken** (R. V., "answer"). "I have seen myself, in Holland, houses where God's servants used to meet when the church was persecuted by heretics, with little sliding panels in odd, out-of-the-way corners, so that if any one knocked at the door people might look out and see who it was without its being known that any one was looking out." — *Rev. J. M. Neale, D.D.* **Named Rhoda,** or Rose. "A gospel rose." — *Rev. H. Drummond Rawnsley.* "This rose has kept its bloom for eighteen hundred years, and is still sweet and fragrant." — *Maclaren.* "The Jews frequently gave their female children the names of plants and flowers, as Susannah (lily); Esther (myrtle); Tamar (palm-tree)." — *Professor Vincent.*

14. She opened not the gate for gladness. "At Peter's voice what is her thought? Peter's safety? No, the household's joy! She identified herself with the sadness and the gladness of that house." — *Rawnsley.* Ramsay thinks that Luke got his account of this scene from Rhoda. "When suddenly the risen Jesus stood in the midst of the disciples, Luke tells us that they believed not for joy (Luke 24 : 41–45). Joy is a serious and holy thing; but there is a joy that sometimes hinders duty and faith." — *Morrison.* "Our joy becomes perilous when it makes us forget the immediate duty." — *Jowett.*

15. They said unto her, Thou art mad. "The narrative well accords with our common experience. We implore a blessing from God, and when it is sent can scarce believe it." — *Bishop Lee.* "God's answers to our prayers ought not to surprise us into incredulity. The responses of the Almighty should be grand familiarities. Why should we suppose the herald of the answer to be mad? The answer often comes knocking at the door but we don't let it in, and we never know that the answer has been given." — *Jowett.* "May God forgive the secret atheism that is at the bottom of some of our praying! . . . I see in some religious periodicals sometimes, 'Remarkable answers to prayers.' There is nothing remarkable in God's hearing prayers. He always hears prayer. Every prayer that is prayer gets answered. There is no Dead Letter Office in heaven. Suppose I saw in the Bristol papers, 'Remarkable instance of Mr. Choate keeping his word." I should have an interview with the editor. Certain prayers are not answered because they are not prayers. They are merely runaway knocks, and they were never meant to get an answer." — *Rev. Thomas J. Choate.* **She constantly** (R. V., "confidently") **affirmed.** Compare the words of the maid in the high priest's house, Luke 22 : 54–59.

Then said they, It is his angel. "An illustration of the Jewish belief in 'guardian angels,' who on critical occasions assumed the likeness of those committed to their care and spoke with their voice." — *Dean Furneaux.*

16. But Peter continued knocking. "Cannot you hear that fisherman's fist? It made plenty of noise. The rash, hot-headed man felt uncomfortable when he was kept waiting in the street. A squad of Herod's soldiers might come at any moment." — *Choate.* "A ghost would not have needed to knock as Peter continued to do, knocking we may be sure so loudly and steadily that Rhoda flew back again and opened wide the door." — *Margaret E. Sangster.* **When they had opened.** Not Rhoda alone, but we may imagine the entire company crowding into the hallway.

17. Beckoning unto them. "Literally, *having shaken downward* with his hand, in order to bespeak silence and attention. It was a favorite gesture of Paul." — *Vincent.* Their outcry would be dangerous, attracting attention from the street. **Declared unto them.** "From one, or probably from several, of those who listened on that night to Peter, as he told the story within a few minutes after his deliverance, Luke heard what had occurred; and we may be confident that it is recorded precisely as Peter described it." — *Ramsay.*

Go shew these things unto James. This was doubtless our Lord's brother, even then evidently a person of importance in the church in Jerusalem, and afterwards seemingly its head or bishop. **And to the brethren.** The other prayer meetings that were in session that night. "Did some gracious answer knock at your door yesterday? Tell it to others. Had you some heartening visitor of grace before the day began? Share it with others." — *Jowett.*

And he departed. He kept secret the place of his hiding. About seven years later we find him in Jerusalem at the famous council (Acts 15 : 7). "Soon after we learn that he was in Antioch, where he began to associate with the Gentile Christians. From this time he seems to have entered a wider mission field and to have travelled as a missionary among the heathen, imitating Paul and Barnabas." — *Prof. Oliver J.*

Thatcher. "The best opinion from traditionary sources is that Peter arrived at Rome just before the outbreak of Nero's persecution, where he soon perished as a martyr. It is related that he was placed on the cross, at his own request, with his head downward, as if unworthy to suffer in the posture of the Master whom he had denied." — *Prof. H. B. Hackett.*

18. **There was no small stir among the soldiers**, particularly the quaternion on duty at the time of Peter's escape. By Roman law they must answer for the appearance of the prisoner with their own lives.

19. **Herod . . . examined the keepers** (R. V., "guards"). "This was a judicial investigation. From the fact that the soldiers were put to death, it may be inferred that the king thought them exceedingly culpable." — *Gilbert.* **He went down from Judæa to Cæsarea**, the Roman seat of government, where he met the tragic and well-deserved death recorded in the remainder of the chapter.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SAFETY AND TRUST. The Christian is safe *in death.* "As the iron gate fell open, so will all the barriers of the sepulchre yield and disappear." — *Bishop Lee.* The Christian is safe *in danger.* One is with him whose single word is mightier than all the armies and navies of earth. The Christian is safe *in perplexity.* His guide can see the end from the beginning, and never makes a mistake. There is no better evidence of our Christianity than this unfaltering trust in our omnipotent Saviour.

LESSON VI. — May 7.

THE MISSIONARIES OF ANTIOCH. — Acts 11:19–30; 12:25–13:12.

PRINT Acts 11:19–26; 13:1–3. COMMIT Acts 13:2, 3.

GOLDEN TEXT. — ***Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations.*** — MATT. 28:19.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

This lesson has eight characters: Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, Sergius Paulus, Bar-jesus, Barnabas, Mark, and Paul. Write these names on eight slips of paper, and have your pupils draw them. Then call the names in the order given, and ask the pupils to tell all they know about them in connection with this lesson. For review, you may redistribute the slips and repeat the process.

LEARN BY HEART.

Acts 13:2, 3; Mark 16:15, 20; Rom. 10:14, 15.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The First Missionaries, and How Every Christian Is to Follow Their Example.

I. TRIBULATION THAT MEANT TRIUMPH, Acts 11:19–24.
II. THE FIRST CHRISTIANS, Acts 11:25, 26.
III. THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES, Acts 12:25; 13:1–3.
IV. THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY BEGUN, Acts 13:4–12.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Probably in the spring of A.D. 47 (Ramsay, 46).

Place. — Antioch in Syria and the island of Cyprus.

Rulers. — Claudius Cæsar, emperor of Rome, A.D. 41–54. Cuspius Fadus, governor of Judæa. The Romans were in Britain, seeking to subjugate the country.

THE ROUND TABLE.

New Testament names for Christians, and their meanings.
Antioch and its history.
The character of Barnabas.
An ideal church, as illustrated by Antioch.
What a prophet was.
Why Paul became a missionary.
Modern men like Elymas.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Raphael's fine cartoon, *Elymas Struck Blind*, in the South Kensington Museum, London.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Works on the Acts already named, and lives of Paul, especially Farrar's and Taylor's. Thatcher's *The Apostolic Church.* Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church*

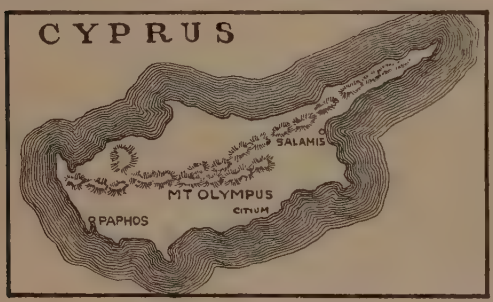
Many fine sermons by Alexander Maclaren. "The Heroism of Foreign Missions," by Phillips Brooks in *The Candle of the Lord*. Sermons by Bishop Simpson, Bishop Burgess, Canon Liddon, and others. Fine discussions of the name Christian (Acts 11 : 26) by Cox (*Biblical Expositions*), Stalker, Chapman (*Revival Sermons*), Coyle (*The Church and the Times*), G. Campbell Morgan (*The Life of the Christian*), Salmon, Bancroft, De Witt, Berle, Fuller, McConnell, and Church. Accounts of Antioch and its wickedness, especially the grove of Daphne, in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chapters XXIII. and XXIV., and in Lew Wallace's *Ben-Hur*. A vivid description of Paul's encounter with Elymas in *Paul, a Herald of the Cross*, by Florence Morse Kingsley.

19. Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stē′phen travelled as far as Phĕnĭ′cē, and Cȳ′prŭs, and An′tĭŏch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

The First Missionaries, and How Every Christian Is to Follow Their Example.

I. **TRIBULATION THAT MEANT TRIUMPH**, Acts 11 : 19–24. Guided by inspiration, Luke now turns from the story of the older apostles and the Jerusalem church, and does what no writer humanly led would ever do, devotes himself to the outreachings of the infant church toward Europe. "It is almost as if St. Luke had foreknown all, and for the sake of after ages had adopted our western point of view and made it his own!" — *Archdeacon Norris.*

19. **They which were scattered abroad upon the persecution** (R. V., "tribulation") **that arose about Stephen.** "The coals were scattered from the hearth in Jerusalem by the armed heel of violence. That did not put the fire out, but only spread it." — *Alexander Maclaren.* **Travelled as far as Phenice** (R. V., "Phœnicia"). Luke follows the geographical course of the expelled Christians. Phœnicia was the district of Syria, about 150 miles long and 15 wide, which lay to the north of Palestine along the Mediterranean, containing Tyre and Sidon, where these missionaries probably planted churches (Acts 21 : 4 ; 27 : 3). **Cyprus.** A large, fertile island west of Phœnicia, now owned by Great Britain. **And Antioch.** This important city of 500,000 souls was situated on the River Orontes, at the northeastern angle of the Mediterranean. In the Roman Empire it was excelled only by Rome and Alexandria. It was the capital of Syria and of near-by Cilicia, the seat of the Roman legate of these provinces. It was "the common mart where East and West met, and in its gay streets representatives elbowed one another of every nation under heaven." — *Prof. James Stalker.* It was "an Oriental Rome." — *Prof. Thomas M. Lindsay.* "It was founded by Seleucus Nicator, who named it after his father Antiochus ; and it was greatly enlarged by Antiochus Epiphanes, who surrounded it with a wall, and beautified it with a magnificent street, which was four miles in length and adorned by double colonnades." — *William M. Taylor.* "Broad bridges spanned the river and its various affluents; baths, aqueducts, basilicas, villas, theatres, clustered on the level plain." — *Farrar.* Four or five miles distant was the famous grove of Daphne, with a circumference of ten miles, a region of great natural and artificial loveliness, sacred to Apollo, and the dark haunt of every vice. "When the satirist Juvenal wants to sum up in one line the moral degradation of Rome, the most scornful reproach he can find is that 'the Syrian Orontes has flowed into the Tiber.'" — *Rackham.* "When the gospel entered Antioch, it entered the full current of life in the Roman Empire." — *New Century Bible.* "Henceforth it is Antioch, and not Jerusalem, that constitutes the mainspring of Christian enterprise." — *Andrews.* In Antioch lived, in the second century, the good bishop and martyr, Ignatius ; and



Map of Cyprus.

20. And some of them were men of Cȳ′prŭs and Cyrē′ne, which, when they were come to An′tĭŏch, spake unto the Grē′cians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

22. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jĕrū′sălem: and they sent forth Bär′năbas, that he should go as far as An′tĭŏch.

there, in the fourth century, preached the eloquent Chrysostom. The site of this great city is now occupied by a meagre town of 6,000 inhabitants called in Arabic Antakiyeh. **Preaching the word to none but unto the Jews.** The Jews would understand most readily the news of the Messiah, and their synagogues would afford the most natural and easy opportunity for preaching.

Antioch in Syria.

20. Some . . . of Cyprus and Cyrene. "In their minds, from their more cosmopolitan education, there was less scruple about mixing with Gentiles." — *Cambridge Bible.* **When they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians.** "Thus simply does the historian tell one of the greatest events in the history of the church." — *Maclaren.* "These men were the first missionaries to the heathen." — *Andrews.* By this act "the gospel first found its full scope and entered on its true mission; for here it was first freely offered to men of every race, and began to gather them into a sacred unity." — *Samuel Cox.* "Viewed in this light, this verse is the culminating point of the Acts historically." — *Farrar.*

APPLICATION. "These men were laymen. We must not think that because we are not ministers or elders or Sunday-school teachers, therefore we have no commission to speak the Word of Christ. Every Christian man and woman, boy and girl, who knows of Christ should go out and tell of him, and keep telling of him all the week." — *J. R. Miller.*

21. The hand of the Lord was with them. "So it was not a mistake." — *Dean Furneaux.* Note in vs. 20, 21, 23 how the personal Christ is made prominent. "If ever we are tempted to think our task heavy, let us not forget that he who set it helps us to do it." — *Maclaren.* **A great number believed.** The inevitable result, when men work with Christ.

22. Tidings . . . came unto . . . Jerusalem. Probably the Jerusalem church had not yet received the striking lesson from the conversion of Cornelius. At any rate, with their ingrained horror of association with Gentiles, they would tremble at this widening out of the church.

They sent forth Barnabas. This was Joseph, a Levite, called Barnabas by the Christians, "in Aramaic, 'the son of exhortation,' or, as we should say, 'the eminent preacher.'" — *Geikie.* He seems to have been wealthy, but to have shared his wealth nobly with the other Christians (Acts 4 : 36, 37). It was he that vouched for Saul when the disciples were afraid to receive him after his conversion (Acts 9 : 26, 27). He was from Cyprus, and would be in sympathy with the Cyprians who were preaching at Antioch. Altogether, he was just the man to send on this errand.

23. Who, when he . . . came, and had seen the grace of God, "the manifest gifts of the Spirit." — *Cambridge Bible.* "Once get that truth into men's minds, that the true test of Christianity is the visible presence of a grace in character which is

23. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

24. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

25. Then departed Bär'năbas to Tär'sus, for to seek Saul:

26. And when he had found him, he brought him unto An'tĭŏch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in An'tĭŏch.

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evidently God's, and whole mountains of prejudice and error melt away." — *Maclaren.*

Was glad. He rejoiced in the success of these missionaries as if it had been his own.

Illustrations. "Boys and girls in school should be glad when other members of their class succeed. Teachers should rejoice when they see the class of another teacher growing. Business and professional men should be pleased when they hear that associates are doing well." — *J. R. Miller.*

Exhorted them all. Remember that his name means Son of Exhortation. **That with purpose of heart.** As Daniel "purposed in his heart" that he would not defile himself with the king's meat and drink. These converts would need a strong purpose to withstand the temptations of their old heathenism. **They would cleave unto the Lord.** "Nothing but keeping in the closest possible communion with the Lord Jesus could avail." — *Lindsay.* It is as necessary for us as for them to cleave to the Lord by much prayer, by meditation on the Bible, and by associating with others in whom his Spirit dwells.

24. **He was a good man.** "More than strictly *upright.*" — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.* "The tap-root of all goodness is reference to God and obedience to him." — *Maclaren.*

Illustrations. "Goodness is better than greatness. When Walter Scott was dying, he said to a friend who stood by him, 'Be a good man.'" — *Miller.*

"George Washington asked Gouverneur Morris, who was going to Europe, to buy for him a gold watch in Paris. 'But not the watch of a foolish man,' he said, 'of a man wishing to make a show; but a watch of which the inside work shall be extremely well cared for, though the case may be very plain.' He wanted a watch of genuine goodness, a sort of Barnabas watch." — *Rev. George C. Phipps.*

Full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. The same description is given of Stephen, Acts 6 : 5.

Illustration. "How shall a wooden vessel be kept water-tight, so that the precious supply of the household may not ooze through its joints into the ground? By keeping it always full of water. Thus grace may be preserved in the heart of a Christian. Keep the vessel full, and the vessel will not leak." — *Arnot.*

II. **THE FIRST CHRISTIANS**, Acts 11 : 25, 26. **25. Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus to seek Saul.** "This is the second occasion upon which Barnabas exhibits remarkable insight as to the possibilities which lay before Saul of Tarsus. See Acts 9 : 27." — *Andrews.* "He had none of the littleness which cannot bear the presence of a possible rival." — *Furneaux.*

26. He brought him unto Antioch. "Think of the talk the two would have when Barnabas got to Tarsus, and on the way back." — *Lindsay.*

"So when two work together, each for each
Is quick to plan, and can the other teach;
"But when alone one seeks the best to know,
His skill is weaker and his thoughts are slow."

A whole year they . . . taught much people. "At Antioch Saul first found a quiet church with a wide scope for all his earnestness." — *Cambridge Bible.* No wonder he continually returned to this haven after his missionary journeys. **The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.** "*Were called.* They did not assume the name themselves." — *Professor Vincent.* The Jews did not give them that name, implying as it did that the Jesus whom they had crucified was the Christ, the promised Messiah. Their scornful name for them was Nazarenes (Acts 24 : 5), because it was a proverb that nothing good could come out of Nazareth (John 1 : 46). The Christians themselves did not choose the name, but "preferred those vague and loving appellations of 'the brethren' (Acts 15 : 1; 1 Cor. 7 : 12), 'the disciples' (Acts 9 : 26; 11 : 29), 'the believers' (Acts 5 : 14), 'the saints' (Rom. 8 : 27;

13 : 1. Now there were in the church that was at Ăn′tĭŏch certain prophets and teachers; as Bär′năbas, and Sĭm′ĕŏn that was called Nī′ger, and Lū′cius of Cȳrē′nē, and Măn′ăĕn, which had been brought up with Hĕr′od the tetrarch, and Saul.

15 : 25), ' the church of Christ ' (Eph. 5 : 25), ' those of the way ' (Acts 19 : 9, 23 ; compare the name *Methodist*), ' the elect ' (2 Tim. 2 : 10, etc.), ' the faithful ' (Eph. 1 : 1), which had been sweetened to them by so much tender and hallowed intercourse during so many heavy trials and persecutions." — *Farrar.* " We may guess that the name was invented by a Greek-speaking Roman, who in some gay moment rolled it with a laugh out of his mouth, to characterize the strange new Jewish sect that was making a stir in the city." — *Stalker.* Antioch was famous for inventing nicknames, and this was analogous to many Roman party names, such as *Pompeiani*, " Pompey's people," *Herodians*, *Cæsarians*. Compare the many other nicknames that have been adopted into dignified speech, such as Puritan, Methodist, Wesleyan, Quaker, Protestant. Like the inscription above the cross, written in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, " Christianos " is a cosmopolitan word, as befits the world-wide character of Christianity. " Christ " is Greek for the Hebrew " Messiah," and the termination, " ian," is Latin. Thus originated earth's greatest word. " For dignity, for honor, for noble significance, no other designation can compare with it for a moment." — *Rev. Robert F. Coyle, D.D.*

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN? A Christian is one that reminds others of Jesus. " I do not know a simpler definition than that to start with." — *Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D.*

" Christ was the first Christian. He set the standard, and men are Christians or not according to whether or not they conform to that standard." — *Rev. S. D. McConnell, D.D.*

Illustrations. " John Wesley is said once in a dream to have found himself at the gate of the place of woe, through which multitudes were passing, and he asked the porter who they were. Were there Catholics going in there? Plenty of them. Were there Protestants? Plenty of them. Were there Presbyterians? Plenty of them. Were there Baptists? Plenty of them. Were there Wesleyans? Plenty of them. Then, in his dream, he was suddenly at the gate of heaven, and when he asked the porter earnestly, ' Are there many Wesleyans inside? ' ' Not one.' ' What! Are there many Baptists? ' ' Not one.' ' Who then? Presbyterians? ' ' Not one.' ' Catholics? ' ' Not one.' ' Then who are inside? ' ' Only Christians.' " — *Prof. James Stalker. D.D.*

" Scipio, the worthy conqueror of Africa, had a son that had nothing of his father but the name, being cowardly, dissolute, and given to all debauchery. It happened that he came into the Senate-house with a ring on his finger wherein the picture of his father was most lively made, when the council by an act of state commanded him to forbear the wearing of it, adjudging it unfit that he should wear his father's picture, who would imitate none of his father's virtues." — *Thomas Fuller* (*who died in* 1661).

III. **THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES**, Acts 12 : 25 ; 13 : 1–3. " Hitherto this divine book has had many subjects ; henceforth it will have but one : the life of him who, next to the divine Master himself, is the great example of all ministers, and more especially of all missionaries." — *Dean Vaughan.*

25. **Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem.** They had carried thither the gifts of the Antioch Christians, whose hearts were touched by the reported sufferings of the poor Christians of Jerusalem because of the great famine which desolated many lands in the days of the Emperor Claudius. Barnabas brought back with him his nephew, John Mark, son of the Mary in whose house the prayer meeting had been held at the time of Peter's imprisonment.

1. **There were in the church that was at Antioch.** " The Mother-Church of the Pauline congregations. It ranks henceforth as more truly the directing and moving power in the Universal Church than Jerusalem was." — *Sir William M. Ramsay.* **Certain prophets and teachers.** " The prophet is a *forth-teller*, not necessarily a *foreteller*. The essence of the prophetic character is immediate intercourse with God." — *Vincent.* " It is significant that the five names that follow represent five different countries." — *Dean Furneaux.* **Barnabas.** " The order evidently gives the official precedence and dignity at this period, A.D. 45. Barnabas ranks first as representing the authority of the central church and as deputy of the apostles, Saul last as

2. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Bär'năbas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

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the youngest and latest." — *Ramsay.* **Simeon that was called Niger.** A Jew, who had taken the common Roman name Niger, meaning black. Some have identified him with the Simon of Cyrene who carried the Saviour's cross. **Lucius of Cyrene**, in northern Africa, perhaps one of the founders of the church in Antioch (Acts 11 : 20). Not St. Luke, whose Latin name was Lucas or Lucanus. **Manaen, which had been brought up with** (R. V., " the foster-brother of ") **Herod the tetrarch**, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, ruler of a fourth part (tetrarchy) of his father's realm, namely, Galilee and Peræa. He is the Herod that killed John the Baptist. Herod the Great paid much honor to a certain Menahem (or Manaen) who had prophesied that he should become a king, and this Manaen may have been the prophet's son or grandson.

2. **As they ministered to the Lord.** The verb means public Christian worship, and has been transferred into English in our word *liturgy*. **And fasted.** " The pious Jew fasted twice in the week (Luke 18 : 12), and Christian Jews would naturally continue the custom." — *Furneaux.* **The Holy Ghost said**, speaking through one or more of the prophets just named. **Separate me Barnabas and Saul.** " The greatest step that had been taken by the church is ascribed directly to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost." — *Andrews.*

3. **When they had fasted and prayed.** Thus Jesus prayed at the setting apart of the Twelve (Luke 6 : 12, 13). **And laid their hands on them.** Some ancient manuscripts read, " They *all* laid hands on them," giving them the blessing of the whole church and communicating to them their authority. **They sent them away.** This infant church could ill spare its great leaders, but they heroically listened to the command of the Spirit and sent them off to regions still more needy. Let our modern churches take heed. However needy the home field, it must not forget the ends of the earth.

IV. **THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY BEGUN**, Acts 13 : 4–12. " When William Burns was chosen by the English Presbyterian Synod to be its first missionary to China, and was asked how soon he could set out, he replied, with prompt decision, 'To-morrow!'" — *William M. Taylor.* Barnabas and Saul were equally prompt.

4. **Being sent forth by the Holy Ghost.** " They were more conscious instruments, perhaps, of God's will than has ever been the case before or since, and starting on a journey more memorable in its issues than any which had ever been undertaken by man." — *Farrar.* It was " the great Christian Odyssey." Yet the Holy Spirit will in the same way send us forth to our tasks, and whenever he sends workers forth, he goes with them to help.

Departed unto (R. V., " went down to ") **Seleucia.** The seaport of Antioch, a considerable town on the Orontes, about sixteen miles from Antioch. It was built by the first Seleucus. The Orontes was navigable for only small vessels. This port is more to be revered even than Delfshaven in Holland, from which the Pilgrim Fathers set sail for Plymouth. **From thence they sailed to Cyprus.** Perhaps they went there because Barnabas was a native of the island, and the Cyprian Christians of Antioch would want their relatives to hear the good news of the Saviour. It was a journey of about one hundred miles. Cyprus contained rich copper mines (the Greek word for copper is *cypros*, from the island), of which Herod the Great had a monopoly; thus many Jews went to Cyprus.

5. **At Salamis**, on the eastern end of the island, formerly the capital, and then a large commercial city. It was the port nearest to Seleucia. " The harbor is now filled with sand, and a few broken columns and fragments of mural masonry alone remain to mark the greatness of the ancient city." — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary.* **They preached** (R. V., " proclaimed ") **the word of God in the synagogues**, the plural indicating the number of the Jews. **They had also John to their minister** (R. V., " as their attendant "). He would " make arrangements for board, lodging, and travelling." — *Furneaux.*

Illustration. " To be even only an 'attendant' in the work for Christ is a high honor and privilege. One evening at an open-air service I saw a young man holding a lantern that another one, who was reading the Bible, could see the book. He

could not speak in public himself, but he could help the minister by holding the light for him." — *J. R. Miller.*

6. **When they had gone through the isle** (R. V., " the whole island "). " To bring out the force of the Greek we must translate, ' When they had made a missionary tour through the island.' " — *Andrews.* **Unto Paphos.** The new city, a few miles away from the old Paphos, the fabled birthplace of Venus (Aphrodite), the goddess of love. Paphos, about one hundred miles west of Salamis, was the capital of the island. Its ruins are to be seen at the modern Baffo. At Paphos the missionaries confronted idolatry in its most licentious and degrading form.

Illustration. " The negro servant advised his master, who was a minister and who had received competing calls to different churches, to ' go where there was most devil.' " — *William M. Taylor.*

They found a certain sorcerer. Pliny says that Cyprus had two schools of soothsayers, one of them Jewish, and mentions in this connection a Sergius Paullus who may have been the proconsul met by Paul and Barnabas. The Romans had lost their hold of their national religion and were seeking some knowledge of the unseen world through the quacks of the recently disclosed East. " There was scarcely a Roman family that did not keep or consult its own foreteller of the future." — *Farrar.* Compare Simon Magus (Acts 8 : 9) and the Jewish exorcists at Ephesus (Acts 19 : 13). **A Jew.** " The bitterest enemies of God's ways are those who have cast aside their early faith." — *Maclaren.* **Whose name was Bar-jesus.** This, his Jewish name, means Son of Jesus or Joshua.

7. **With the deputy** (R. V., " proconsul ") **of the country.** Roman provinces were of two kinds. Those needing military rule were under the emperor and were governed by military rulers called proprætors (legates). The pacified provinces were under the senate and were governed by proconsuls (deputies). Cyprus was shifted from one class to the other and back again, but at this time, as is known, it was a senatorial province. Luke, as always, is accurate. **Sergius Paulus, a prudent man** (R. V., " a man of understanding "). Pliny says that he wrote a book on Cyprus. Di Cesnola discovered in Cyprus a slab with a Greek inscription containing the name of Paulus, proconsul. " L. Sergius Paulus " is named in a Roman inscription of the reign of Claudius. He summoned the missionaries and **desired** (R. V., " sought ") **to hear the word of God**, doubtless wishing to compare the new teachings with the teachings of Roman and Greek philosophers and the new " sorcerers."

8. **But Elymas the sorcerer.** Elymas is an Arabic word meaning *the wise*, and equivalent to " the Great Magician," " the Wise one " or wizard. **Withstood them.** His position at court was far too distinguished and lucrative to yield tamely. Modern missionaries, to Africa, the islands, China, etc., have often met opposition from medicine men, witch doctors, and astrologers.

9. **Then Saul** (**who also is called Paul**). Jerome thought that he was called Paul from this first distinguished convert, the proconsul. So Maclaren: " Great conquerors have been named from their victories: Africanus, Germanicus, Nelson of the Nile, Napier of Magdala, and the like." Most scholars, however, consider that Saul from boyhood had had two names, as was common among Jews living in heathen cities: Saul (Hebrew, Sha-ul, " asked," " child of prayer ") for his Hebrew friends, and Paul (Latin *Paullus*, " little ") for Gentile intercourse. Now he signalizes his entrance upon the great mission to the Gentiles by taking up his Roman name.

Illustrations. A Jewish rabbi, known to the world as Charles ——, informs us that his real name is Isaiah. Thus Joseph was known to the Egyptians as Zaphnath Paaneah; Daniel to the Assyrians as Belteshazzar, and Hadassah to the Persians as Esther. Cephas Peter, Thomas Didymus, John Boanerges, Jacob Israel, and Joseph Barnabas are other examples of double names.

Filled with the Holy Ghost. It was an important occasion. " He was appealing direct, for the first time, to the Græco-Roman world as himself a member of that world." — *Ramsay.* **Set** (R. V., " fastened ") **his eyes on him.** The verb denotes concentrated attention, either " the effort produced by defective sight, or the fixed gaze of righteous indignation." — *E. J. Hasell.*

10. **O full of all subtilty** (R. V., " guile ") **and all mischief** (R. V., " villany "). Elymas " had reached that terrible point where, with Milton's Satan, he could say with all his heart, ' Evil, be thou my good.' " — *Burrell.* **Thou child of the devil.** His name, Bar-jesus, meant " Child of Salvation." Yet, " for the hope of a little temporal advantage to himself, he was not hesitating to imperil the everlasting interests of a fellow man." — *Hasell.*

11. **Thou shalt be blind.** "This was the only miracle Paul had seen done, and apprentice-like he does what he had seen the master do." — *Lindsay.* "His own loss of sight gave Paul spiritual vision; he hoped it would do the same for Elymas." — *Canon Dennis.* **For a season.** Paul left room for repentance, remembering Christ's mercy in keeping him only three days without sight. Tradition says that Elymas regained his vision. **Immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness.** "The mention of the successive stages, first dimness, then total darkness, is characteristic of the physician." — *Vincent.*

Elymas struck with blindness. Raphael.

Illustration. "A Roman, who had been proscribed under the government of the Triumvirs, to save his life disguised himself by wearing a black patch over one eye. A good while after, when the danger was past, he took off the patch, but in vain, for the sight of the eye was gone. Even so, if men stubbornly shut their hearts against God's truth, their spirits will be hardened with insensibility, and the light that is in them will become darkness." — *Taylor.*

12. **Then the deputy . . . believed.** "The blindness of Elymas opened the eyes of the proconsul." — *Felten.* The name of a Sergia Paullina has been found in a Christian cemetery at Rome — possibly some of the proconsul's family. **Being astonished at the doctrine** (R. V., "teaching") **of the Lord.** That is, Paul's teaching about the Lord. Note that the miracle, though it won the proconsul's attention, is not given as the cause of his conversion.

How Christians Are to Meet Opposition. 1. Let us realize that opposition develops our strength. The athlete strengthens his muscles by pulling and pushing and lifting. The mathematician trains his mind by solving difficult problems. An easy life is always a weak life.

2. Let us remember that opposition is a token of our allegiance to truth. "Woe unto you," said Christ, "when all men speak well of you." Evil strikes back. If you receive no blows, you are not fighting for the right.

3. Let us comfort ourselves with the knowledge that God will bring us to a triumphant conclusion out of all our conflicts, if we rely on him. Elymas may flourish for a while, but his final downfall is sure.

4. Therefore let us expect opposition when we undertake any good work, and let us meet it patiently, hopefully, with invincible courage, knowing that our Lord is by our side, and that he cannot fail.

LESSON VII. — May 14.

"LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES." — Acts 13:13–52.

PRINT vs. 13–15, 42–52. COMMIT vs. 45, 46.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth.* — Acts 13:47.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Divide the verses of the lesson among the pupils, and ask each to write out at home three questions on the verse or verses assigned to him. Paul's sermon will be assigned to only one or two pupils, and will be treated comprehensively and not in detail, as in these notes. In the recitation the pupils will ask their questions in turn, the class answering them, and the teacher supplementing them with other questions if necessary.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

This lesson is treated in most of the volumes already mentioned this quarter, notably Geikie's *New Testament Hours*, Vol. II.; Vaughan's *The Church of the First Days;* Bird's *Paul of Tarsus;* Ramsay's *Galatians, Cities of St. Paul*, and *The Church in the Roman Empire;* Baring-Gould's *A Study of St. Paul.* "Paul the Preacher," in Greene's *The Many-Sided Paul.* On John Mark, Dudley's *St. Paul's Friendships;* Matheson's *Representative Men;* Wells's *Bible Miniatures;* Jones's *Elims of Life.* Admirable chapters in Burrell's *The Gospel of Gladness*, Pentecost's *Grace Abounding*, and *The Fifth Gospel.* Sermons by Spurgeon, Banks, Arnold, etc. A striking chapter in Mrs. Kingsley's *Paul, a Herald of the Cross.*

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Opposition, and the Great Good That Came from It.

I. A MISSIONARY OPENING, vs. 13–15.
II. THE FIRST RECORDED MISSIONARY SERMON, vs. 16–41.
III. MISSIONARY FRIENDS AND FOES, vs. 42–45.
IV. MISSIONARY EXTENSION, vs. 46–52.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 45, 46; Matt. 10:22, 23; Matt. 13:19–23.

THE ROUND TABLE.

How Paul became leader.
How we imitate John Mark.
Jewish synagogue service.
Paul's characteristics as a speaker.
The evil of jealousy.
The good that comes from opposition.
Why Paul turned to the Gentiles.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Perhaps in the summer of A.D. 47, extending through the fall and winter (Ramsay, one year earlier).

Place. — Perga, the capital of Pamphylia, on the southern coast of Asia Minor, and Antioch, the capital of Pisidia, southern Galatia, about ninety miles north.

13. Now when Paul and his company loosed from Pā′phos, they came to Pĕr′ga in Pamphȳl′ĭa: and John departing from them returned to Jĕrū′sălem.

Opposition, and the Great Good That Came from It.

I. A MISSIONARY OPENING, vs. 13–15. "Paul is now fully under way. This is the beginning of his course, and what a course! No other mere man has left his mark so deep and broad upon this world." — *Arnot.*

13. Paul and his company. Events in Cyprus had set Paul so completely in the lead that Barnabas is not even mentioned at the outset of the new enterprise. **Loosed from** (R. V., "set sail from") **Paphos.** Their direction would be partly determined by the chance of finding a vessel going that way, since ancient travellers were so limited in means of transportation.

Pamphylia. Asia Minor in Paul's day was divided into seven Roman provinces: Asia on the west, Pamphylia and Cilicia on the south, Bithynia and Pontus on the north below the Black Sea, and Galatia and Cappadocia occupying the vast interior regions. Pamphylia bent about the bay of the same name in a curve of about 120 miles, lying about 170 miles northwest of Cyprus.

Perga. Paul may have landed at the seaport of Attalia, now Adalia, a city to-day of about thirty thousand inhabitants while Perga is only a mound of ruins. In those days, however, the river Cestrus was navigable, and about eight miles from the mouth Paul reached Perga, "and anchored under the cliffs, which were crowned by the acropolis of the bright Greek city and the marble pillars of its celebrated temple of Artemis (Diana)." — *Farrar.* Ten miles to the west is Mount Climax, round whose base "Alexander waded breast-high for a whole day, while his army was threading the passes inland. The Eurymedon, off which Cimon, with the Athenian fleet, gained his great victory over that of the Persians, is within a few hours' sail." — *Geikie.*

14. But when they departed from Pĕr'ga, they came to Ăn'tĭŏch in Pĭsĭd'ĭa, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down.

And John . . . returned to Jerusalem. A number of reasons for John Mark's desertion have been suggested: 1. He may have objected to seeing Paul superseding his cousin Barnabas. 2. His mother may have been sick in Jerusalem, and he may have returned to care for her. 3. He may have been weakened by the fever and unable to go on. 4. Brought up in Jerusalem as a strict Jew, he may have objected to Paul's growing intercourse with the Gentiles. "It is significant that after the conference at Jerusalem, when the church had given its sanction to Paul's policy, Mark was once more anxious to join him." — *Furneaux.* 5. He may have returned to Jerusalem to be with Peter, with whose methods he was more in sympathy, and from whom he obtained the materials for his Gospel. 6. He may have feared the dangers of the route that Paul proposed to follow. "Behind Perga rose the snow-clad peaks of the Taurus Mountains, which had to be penetrated through narrow passes, where crazy bridges spanned the rushing torrents, and the castles of robbers, who watched for passing travellers to pounce upon, were hidden in positions so inaccessible that even the Roman arms had not been able to exterminate them." — *Prof. James Stalker.* Alexander himself found enormous difficulty in penetrating this region. Whatever the reason was, Paul was not satisfied with it (Acts 15 : 37–40), and separated from Barnabas, when, later, he insisted on taking Mark along. "Mark was deserting the Cross of Christ in the presence of danger; and, doing so, he forfeited the honor and privilege of sharing to the end the first world missionary enterprise." — *Carl Hermon Dudley.*

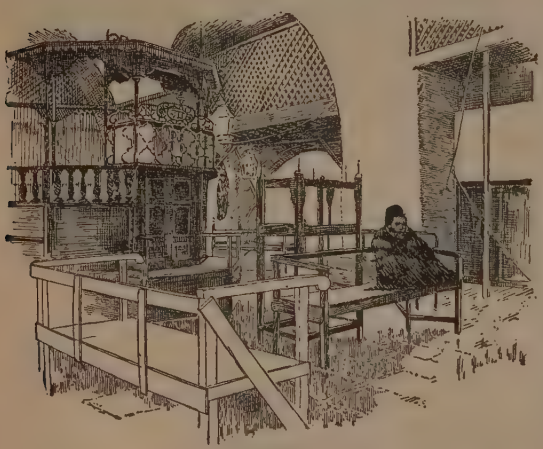
Illustrations. The character of "Temporary" in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress.*

John Mark was "like some recruit that goes into battle full of fervor, but as soon as the bullets begin to 'ping' makes the best of his way to the rear." — *Maclaren.*

Many think that Mark was the disciple referred to in Mark 14 : 51, 52.

Mark went back to Jerusalem. "He was probably received with contempt — as a rolling stone. A rolling stone he certainly was; but it was not rolling downhill." — *George Matheson.* His missionary zeal afterwards restored him to Paul's good opinion (2 Tim. 4 : 11).

14. **They departed from Perga** (R. V., "passing through from Perga"). It is possible that Paul was driven from Perga, where he does not seem to have preached until his return, by an attack of malarial fever, which is prevalent in those moist plains, hemmed in by the Taurus Mountains on the north. Such an attack is liable to recur for years afterwards, and Sir William Ramsay thinks that this disease is the "thorn (literally *stake*) in the flesh" of which Paul speaks in 2 Cor. 12 : 7. Malaria is accompanied by a violent headache often described by patients as like a red-hot bar driven through the forehead. Malaria, entering the system in lowlands, is likely to show itself in fierce intensity when the victim removes to higher altitudes, as the present writer experienced once when he went from Boston to the White Mountains. Paul's malaria may have first shown itself when he got up to Antioch, and compelled him to tarry there; for he says in his letter to the Galatians (written to the Christians of that region, which was then in Galatia), "Through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at first" (Gal. 4 : 13, 14). The



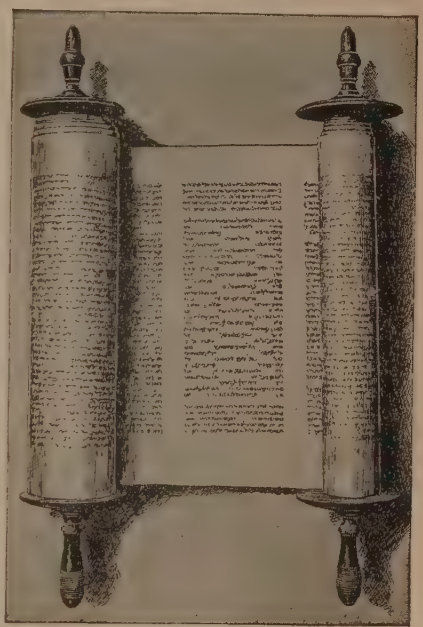
From a drawing by permission of McClure's.

Interior of a Jewish Synagogue.

15. And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, *Ye* men *and* brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

journey of one hundred miles, up through the mountain passes to the great plateau, 3,600 feet above the sea, on which Antioch is situated, was one of the most perilous of Paul's life. With the constant danger from robbers, "boulders, landslides, huge gulfs washed out in the track by winter floods sweeping down from the heights, a precipitous descent here, an almost perpendicular ascent there, between rocks, through forests, across swamps; a hundred fordings of ice-cold, arrow-swift torrents, would be the continually changing experience." — *Geikie.* Doubtless it was on this journey that Paul met many of the perils enumerated in 2 Cor. 11 : 23–27.

Came to Antioch in Pisidia (southern Galatia). This important city "was probably one of the sixteen Antiochs founded by Seleucus Nikator, and named after his father. The ruins are impressive and of great extent." — *Ramsay.* It was on the great Roman road which stretched across Asia Minor from Ephesus to Syria. "It was built on a hill between two plains, one of which was in Pisidia and the other in Pamphylia. There are remains of three temples, a theatre, several churches, and an aqueduct, all of stone and well built." — *Abbott.* Bacchus was worshipped there, and the Phrygian moon-god, Men. "Some time before Paul's visit the Romans had ordered the orgies of the moon-temple to cease, and the vile priests and their slaves to be banished." — *Robert Bird.* "Their first care was to get a lodging; and then they had to seek for employment, for they worked at their trade wherever they went. Who could dream that this travel-stained man, going from one tentmaker's door to another, seeking for work, was carrying the future of the world beneath his robe!" — *Stalker.*



The Book of the Law.

Went into the synagogue. "At the further end stood a desk for the reader. Above that was the women's gallery; their faces could be seen behind the partition of lattice-work. On the side of the room nearest Jerusalem was the ark or chest for the sacred scrolls. Seats for the worshippers were arranged according to station, those for the rabbis being nearest the reader's desk. As each attendant entered he cast a scarf over his shoulders, the sacred tallith with its four tassels." — *Burrell.* **On the Sabbath day**, probably their first Sabbath in Antioch. It was Paul's custom always to begin his missionary work with the synagogues, as furnishing his most likely audience. **And sat down**, perhaps on the benches with the elders of the synagogue, implying that they were visiting rabbis.

After the reading of the law and the prophets. Synagogue service consisted of the following programme: 1. Prayers read by the "angel of the synagogue." 2. The clerk of the synagogue took the Scripture roll from the ark and handed it to the reader, who read first the prescribed lesson from the Law (the Pentateuch), and then the second lesson from the Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, First and Second Samuel, First and Second Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the twelve minor prophets; the rest of the Old Testament was called the Hagiographa). After each verse of the Law and each three verses of the Prophets, read in Hebrew, the meaning was given in Greek by an officer called the Interpreter. Then the Scripture roll was returned to the ark. 3. The sermon, which was usually based upon some portion of the Scriptures that had been read (see Luke 4 : 16–21). In Paul's sermon he quotes Old Testament passages

containing two rare verbs, found respectively in Deut. 1 : 31 and Isa. 1 : 2, two chapters which are read on the same day in Jewish synagogues now; and the arrangement probably dates from the time of Paul. Those chapters probably were the first and second lessons on this occasion.

The rulers of the synagogue. Elders of the church, "men of leisure who managed the affairs of the synagogue." — *Farrar.* **Sent unto them.** "There were no definite ministers attached to the synagogue, nor were these functions confined to a special class. Any Israelite of good standing, though preferably a priest, might pray, preach, or read; and the selection lay with the ruler of the synagogue." — *Rackham.* **If ye have any word of exhortation.** "Probably a technical phrase used in the synagogue (compare Heb. 13 : 22; 1 Tim. 4 : 13)." — *Furneaux.* "It seems probable that the rulers satisfied themselves previously as to the qualifications of Paul and Barnabas." — *Ramsay.* "The customs of their nation made it a point of duty to salute the brethren on their arrival and present themselves before the elders, — Paul as Doctor of the Law, Barnabas as Levite." — *Fouard.*

Capturing Opportunities for Christ. Every day the Christian finds many opportunities to speak for Christ — words of bold testimony or of kindly helpfulness. Let him be quick to seize them, as Paul was. "There are two O's for every man — Opportunity and Obligation. When Opportunity becomes larger, Obligation increases in like measure." — *J. R. Miller.* "The spectre that I am most afraid of at the last is the spectre of lost opportunities." — *Theodore L. Cuyler.* "No wave on the great ocean of time, when once it has floated past us, can be recalled." — *Gladstone.*

II. **THE FIRST RECORDED MISSIONARY SERMON**, vs. 16–41. We have in the Acts three of Paul's sermons; the other two (Acts 14 : 15–18; 17 : 22–31) are to Gentiles, this is to Jews. In this sermon are many points of correspondence to Peter's on the day of Pentecost, and a still closer correspondence to Stephen's defence before the Sanhedrin. "Truly the Martyr's mantle had fallen on his persecutor!" — *Archdeacon Norris.* The address, which of course we have only in outline, is in constant agreement with Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.

The Preacher. **16. Then Paul stood up.** "The usual Jewish practice was for the speaker to sit (Luke 4 : 20), but the Greek and Roman custom was to stand, and here the population was largely Roman." — *Furneaux.* **Beckoning with his hand.** Compare Peter's gesture in Acts 12 : 17.

The Audience. **Men of Israel.** "Israel was the sacred name for the Jews, their especial badge and title of honor. It is said that the modern Jews in the East still delight in this title." — *Prof. Marven R. Vincent.* **And ye that fear God, give audience** (R. V., "hearken"). In this phrase Paul addresses "the Gentiles, who, without going over to Judaism, yet worshipped the God of Israel, and had come into the synagogue for the purpose of listening to his word." — *Weiss.*

The Text. Paul not only spoke from the Scripture passages of the day, already cited, but he quoted Ps. 89 : 20 and 1 Sam. 13 : 14 in v. 22; Ps. 2 : 7 in v. 33; Isa. 55 : 3 in v. 34; Ps. 16 : 10 in v. 35; and Hab. 1 : 5 in v. 41. It was a Scriptural discourse.

The Sermon. It had six sections, or "heads." A. *The Messiah's People and Ancestry*, vs. 17–23. "The Jews had a glorious history, and any happily expressed allusions to its more glorious incidents always awakened their most lively emotions." — *Prof. J. W. McGarvey.* Therefore Paul began wisely by tracing the history of God's people to David, showing how marvellously it was preserved, and how finally Jesus, the long-expected Messiah, appeared in the family of King David.

B. *The Messiah's Forerunner*, vs. 24, 25. According to prophecy, the appearance of this Messiah was heralded by John the Baptist. "To the Jews the fulfilment of prophecy in Christ had been from the first the most effective approach, and likewise for those Gentiles whom the preacher met in the synagogue the argument that in Christianity is to be found the flowering of Judaism must have had weight." — *Prof. J. H. Ropes.*

C. *The Messiah Rejected*, vs. 26–29. The Messiah's salvation came to Paul's hearers, because it was rejected by the Jews of Jerusalem.

D. *The Risen Messiah*, vs. 30–37. Jesus proved his Messiahship by rising from the dead according to prophecy, as was proved by many witnesses. Said Dr. Arnold of Rugby, a profound student of history, "I do not know of any historical fact more substantially proven by cumulative evidence than the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Illustration. "Ian Maclaren used to tell of two pictures which he once saw in the

42. And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gĕn'tiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.

43. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Bär'năbas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

44. And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

45. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

Salon in Paris. One represented a king lying on his bed. He had just died, and his servants, who a moment before had flown at his word, were engaged in rifling his casket and his wardrobes. What do you think was the legend beneath? 'William the Conqueror'! The other picture represented a Man lying in a rocky tomb, also dead; but the angels were keeping watch, and to that tomb, now empty, all ages and all generations are coming. He was the Conqueror and his the victory." — *Louis Albert Banks, D.D.*

E. *Jesus the Justifier*, vs. 38, 39. This Messiah alone can forgive the many sins which men commit, sins which the law of Moses could point out but could not remove. "These verses, containing the essential truth of Pauline theology, viz., the doctrine of justification by faith, really differentiate the speech from the addresses of Peter and Stephen." — *Andrews.*

F. *Conclusion: a Word of Warning*, vs. 40, 41. Perhaps signs of opposition were given by the audience. Paul closes with a note of warning. Quoting Habakkuk's prophecy of the terrible coming of the Chaldeans to destroy his nation, a prophecy that was sadly fulfilled, Paul warns all unbelievers of a similar fate if they reject the Messiah. "And so ended the greatest sermon that was ever preached in the synagogue of Antioch." — *Rackham.*

III. **MISSIONARY FRIENDS AND FOES**, vs. 42–45. Read v. 42 in the R. V.: "And as they (Paul and Barnabas) went out, they (the hearers) besought that these words might be spoken to them the next Sabbath." The Greek is literally "the Sabbath between," which may refer to the Monday and Thursday services. Questions and discussion were in order after the sermon, but Paul was suffering from an infirmity and would be wearied from his speaking, so the missionaries did not stay for the formal "breaking up" of the congregation (v. 43).

43. When that occurred, **many of the Jews and religious** (R. V., "devout") **proselytes** (the Gentiles) **followed Paul and Barnabas**, probably to their lodging. "Pleasant excitement it must have been to these fishers for men when they felt many grasping and drawing." — *Arnot.* That was a good way to leave church, instead of "remarking on the dress of their fellow worshippers or criticising the preacher." — *Taylor.* **Who . . . persuaded** (R. V., "urged") **them to continue in the grace of God.** Paul knew that his converts would meet many severe temptations, and would find perseverance difficult.

44. **The next sabbath day came almost the whole city together.** It is personal work that gathers crowds, and doubtless Paul and Barnabas had held many conversations through the week, telling the blessed news of Jesus Christ. **To hear the word of God.** The synagogue was, of course, too small for so large an audience, and Paul may have stood in the doorway, addressing at the same time those within and the throng in the street outside.

45. **When the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy** (R. V., "jealousy"). "They were jealous that a single address of this dubious stranger, with his suspicious innovations, should have produced a greater effect than their years of proselytism." — *Farrar.* "The opposition of the Jews was not caused by jealousy alone; behind it there was unbelief." — *Professor Gilbert.*

Illustration. "A wrestler was so envious of Theagenes, the prince of wrestlers, that he could not be consoled, and after Theagenes died and a statue was erected over him his envious antagonist went out every night and wrestled with the statue, until one night he threw it and it fell on him and crushed him to death." — *Talmage.*

46. Then Paul and Bär'năbas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gĕn'tiles.

47. For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gĕn'tiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

48. And when the Gĕn'tiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

And spake against (R. V., "contradicted") **those things which were spoken by Paul.** "Such interruptions are not unknown at the present day in Oriental congregations." — *McGarvey.* **Blaspheming**, or cursing Christ. "No doubt they contended that 'every one that hangeth on a tree is accursed' (Gal. 3 : 13)." — *Rackham.* "Every one acquainted with Orientals can picture the scene: the wild fury, the tempest of voices, the fierce gesticulations, the storm of curses." — *Geikie.*

Illustration. The crew of a wrecked vessel saw some men on shore firing bomb-shells at them out of a mortar, and were horrified at their cruelty and inhumanity. But at length a shell passed directly over the tossing ship, and a line which it carried dropped on the deck. The struggling seamen seized it, drew a rope from the shore with it, and were all saved. So the Jewish rulers saw only attack and destruction in the efforts of Paul and Barnabas to save them.

IV. **MISSIONARY EXTENSION**, vs. 46–52. **46. Paul and Barnabas waxed bold** (R. V., "spake out boldly"). Doubtless they had foreseen this emergency and planned what they would do; it was no snap judgment. **It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you.** The Jews were best fitted to receive Christianity, if they would, because of their long training as the chosen people, and their noble religious tendencies. It was no accident that the first disciples and apostles were Jews. **But seeing ye put** (R. V., "thrust") **it from you.** "The rejection of Christ is a very solemn business. The history of the Jews, since their rejection of our Lord, has been written in blood and tears." — *Spurgeon.*

Illustration. Dr. A. F. Schauffler tells about a poor, sick man whose rent he was paying. This man, years before, had had a chance to buy a certain corner lot for $600, but preferred to buy a horse and buggy for pleasure driving. That piece of land had just sold for $500,000!

From Calmet.

Coin of Ant'och of Pisidia.

The figure is that of the god Mēn, Mensis, month. The crescent of the moon appears behind his shoulders. This deity was worshipped at Antioch, and to his temple were attached great multitudes of priests and valuable possessions. The legend on this coin is: *Mensis* (Mensis). *Col.* (of the Colony). *Cæs.* (Cæsarea). *Antioch.* (Antiochia).

And judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life. "We are daily judging ourselves unworthy of divine grace in every act of refusal to accept and rely upon it." — *Abbott.* **Lo, we turn to the Gentiles.** "This *Lo* marks a mighty revolution; Christianity was to become world-wide not by the Jews, but in spite of them." — *Professor Lindsay.* "The Rubicon is no longer before them; it is crossed, and the gospel stands at length on the side of Rome." — *Prof. J. M. Stifler.* "We in our day can hardly feel how much strength of character it needed to take this bold position." — *Knox.*

47. Paul then quoted Isaiah's saying (Isa. 49 : 6), **I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles.** "Jesus' life begins with the statement that he was to be 'a light to lighten the Gentiles' (Luke 2 : 32), and closes with the command, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature' (Mark 16 : 15). Between those two missionary texts lies the great missionary life of Him who came from heaven to this wicked world to save it." — *Cyrus Hamlin.*

48. **The Gentiles . . . were glad.** "There was, at the time when Paul was in Asia Minor, a desire to be rid of the established religion, and to have it replaced by another that met and fostered the best instincts of humanity. This it is which accounts for the wide circle of proselytes, more or less attached, that engirdled every synagogue." — *S. Baring-Gould.* But Judaism, the purest religion known to them, was surrounded by many burdensome and un-

49. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

50. But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Bär'năbas, and expelled them out of their coasts.

51. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Ĭcō'nĭum.

52. And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

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necessary restrictions. Paul offered them the rose of Judaism without its thorns. **As many as were ordained to eternal** (R. V., "everlasting") **life believed**, that is, became "believers," publicly declared themselves to be Christians. "Ordained" means literally "marshaled themselves, placed themselves in the ranks of those who welcomed the offer of eternal life." — *Speaker's Commentary*. On the divine side, God drafted them into his army; on the human side, they enlisted with joy and gladness. "Salvation is wholly of the election of God, and yet it is freely offered to every man, and every man can accept it if he will. Paul states these two truths together, and attempts no reconciliation. Let us not venture in where he did not dare to tread." — *Charles Simeon*.

49. **The word of the Lord**, the good news about Christ, **was published** (R. V., "spread abroad"). Thus the new converts proved their conversion, by seeking to convert others. "If a man is not a missionary Christian, he will be a *missing* Christian." — *A. J. Gordon*. **Throughout all the region.** "This implies a stay of some months at least." — *Furneaux*. "Region" is the technical Latin word *Regio*, a military and administrative district of which Antioch was the centre.

50. **But the Jews stirred up** (R. V., "urged on"). They were influential in Antioch, though not numerous. **The devout and honourable women** (R. V., "the devout women of honourable estate"). "Jewish proselytes of social influence." — *Abbott*. Women were very influential in Asia Minor. "They were appointed as magistrates, as presidents of the games, and even the Jews elected a woman as ruler of the synagogue at Smyrna." — *Expositor's Greek Testament*. **And the chief men of the city.** Probably Roman officers. "It is an indication of the hold which Paul and Barnabas had taken on the community that only by the aid of the chief men and prominent women could a successful opposition be raised against them." — *Gilbert*. **Raised** (R. V., "stirred up") **persecution against Paul and Barnabas.** Probably they were scourged by the lictors. "The three floggings with rods alluded to in 2 Cor. 11 : 25 can only have been inflicted in Roman colonies." — *Furneaux*. Compare 2 Tim. 3 : 11. **Expelled them out of their coasts** (R. V., "borders"). "This was the method which the overruling providence of God took to keep the first planters of the Church from staying too long at a place." — *Matthew Henry*. "We can picture the tall, strong Levite, and his companion in the brown cloak, with ragged-looking guards on each side, weeping friends around, and an idle crowd following, as they were led along the paved streets through the low arch, and thrust out of the eastern gate, and along the open road, until they came to the city boundaries. With a push on the shoulder, and perhaps a blow from the end of a spear, they were ordered to go on, and not come back again if they valued their lives." — *Bird*.

Illustrations. Thus Judson and his comrades were driven from Calcutta. Thus Milne was driven from Canton, and compelled to begin missionary labors for China from the Malay Peninsula. Thus in 1835 all the missionaries were driven from Madagascar. Thus in 1637 Christianity was driven from Japan for two centuries. Thus John G. Paton, after a thousand perils, was driven from the island of Tanna. But in every case Christianity has returned, as Paul returned to Antioch, all the stronger for its experience of persecution.

"I have heard of scholars who actually left the Sunday school because those in the same class treated them so coldly, or said unkind things about their dress or their homes. Those who drove away their classmates in this way were as bad as the Jews of Antioch." — *Cyrus Hamlin*.

51. **They shook off the dust of their feet against them**, according to Christ's directions, Matt. 10 : 14. The action indicated that even the dust of Antioch was unclean. "It was enjoined by the rabbis that every one, on passing from heathen soil into their land, should carefully clear away every particle of the unhallowed earth from their sandals and feet, lest it should pollute the land which Jehovah had blessed." — *Canon*

Tristram. **And came unto Iconium.** An important city about eighty miles south-east of Antioch.

52. **The disciples were filled with joy**, while the Jews (v. 45) were "filled with envy." They were joyful in spite of the fear of persecution, for the best of all good tidings had come to them. **And with the Holy Ghost.** "Surely joy in such circumstances was no less supernatural a token of His presence than rushing wind or parting flames or lips opened to speak with tongues." — *Maclaren.*

The Good That Comes from Opposition. "Success has its conditions, and one of them is opposition. A gospel which raised no opposition would be questionable." — *Burrell.*

"The burning of Tyndale's Testaments at the cross of St. Paul's by order of the Bishop of London gave the exiled translator the means of carrying on his work with still greater vigor. 'Truth, like a torch, the more it's shook it shines'; and the very fierceness of the storm only carries the arrowy seed on its downy wings to a kindlier and more fertile soil. After a revival, the next best thing for the progress of God's truth is a persecution." — *William M. Taylor.*

"Suppose the Jews had welcomed St. Paul; what then? We should perhaps have had to wait a long time for missions to the Gentiles. But the world was ready for the gospel, and the Holy Spirit found a way of sending it through an apparent failure. He turns failure into success so long as we are anxious to do his bidding."—*Canon Dennis.*

LESSON VIII. — May 21.

THE CRIPPLE OF LYSTRA. — Acts 14.

PRINT vs. 8–20. COMMIT vs. 8–10.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength.* — Isa. 40 : 29.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Our lesson has to do with seven cities : Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Antioch of Pisidia, Perga, Attalia, and Antioch of Syria. Make paper banners bearing these names, and mount each on a hat-pin. Prepare an outline map of the region covered, and mount it on a board, placing it before the class. Write a series of questions on the events of the lesson, placing each question on a separate slip of paper, and sticking the appropriate hat-pin through the slip, so that the questions relating to each city will be strung in order on the hat-pin of that city, below the banner. Give these to seven pupils, each of whom, when called upon, is to stick his banner in the map at the right place, and then the pupils will pull off the questions in order and answer them, first reading each question aloud.

THE ROUND TABLE.

How Paul overcame obstacles.
Perilous popularity.
Stoning in the Bible.
Tribulation, and what it will do for us.
Ancient stories of the gods coming to earth.
Summary of the first missionary journey.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 8–10 ; John 16 : 33 ; Rev. 7 : 14.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Immediately after the last lesson. Professor Ramsay thinks Paul and Barnabas were in Iconium during the spring and summer of A.D. 47, spent the winter in Derbe, the spring and summer of A.D. 48 in visiting the Galatian churches, and returned to Antioch in Syria in the autumn of 48.

Place. — Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe in southern Galatia, with a journey backward through Antioch in Pisidia and Perga in Pamphylia, and thence to Antioch in Syria from which they had started.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Tribulation, and How It Wins a Kingdom.

I. Triumph and Trial in Iconium, vs. 1–7.
II. A Victory of Faith in Lystra, vs. 8–10.

III. POPULARITY IN LYSTRA, vs. 11–18.
IV. TRIBULATION IN LYSTRA, vs. 19–20.
V. A WORKMANLIKE CLOSE OF THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY, vs. 21–28.

THE LESSON IN ART.

Raphael's famous cartoon of the *Healing of the Cripple at Lystra* (South Kensington Museum, London).

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

The legend of Baucis and Philemon in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book VIII., lines 621–726. Told in Hawthorne's *Wonder Book*, "The Miraculous Pitcher." Browning's "The Patriot." The story of Paul and Thekla, in Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art*, II., 556. The stoning at Lystra in Kingsley's *Paul, a Herald of the Cross*, chapters 28, 29.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Ramsay's *Paul, the Traveller, Church in the Roman Empire, The Cities of St. Paul*, and *Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*. Morrison's *Footsteps of the Flock*. Henry van Dyke's *The Reality of Religion*. McConnell's *A Year's Sermons*. Trench's *Hulsean Lectures*. Spurgeon's *Sermons*, Eighth Series.

Tribulation, and How It Wins a Kingdom.

I. TRIUMPH AND TRIAL IN ICONIUM, vs. 1–7. **1. Iconium.** Expelled from Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas took the Roman military road to the southeast, and after a journey of about ninety miles came to Iconium. This was an ancient city whose inhabitants, belonging to the Roman province of Galatia, liked to consider themselves Phrygians. "At Iconium King Nannakos or Annakos reigned before the flood as king of the Phrygians. Xenophon, who visited it during the Anabasis of Cyrus, calls it the extremest city of Phrygia. Pliny quotes it among a list of famous old Phrygian cities." — *Sir William Ramsay.* It was here that the Turkish empire may be said to have begun, for "the city was the capital of the Seljukian Turks in the twelfth century, and still boasts of walls between two and three miles round, pierced by no fewer than eighty gates; the walls built, mainly, of the stones of the ancient city." — *Geikie.* The modern town, called Konia, is the terminus of a railway extending from the Bosphorus. It is picturesque with "its great mosque, 'the minaret reaching to the stars'; with its colleges, churches, public baths, its fortified palace, its carpet and colored-leather manufactories; with its massive Arabic architecture and famous Mohammedan tomb." — *Knox.* "Its splendid position on the western edge of the vast plains of Central Asia Minor made it a great commercial centre." — *Prof. H. T. Andrews.* "Like Damascus, it seems to spring from the desert, and never-failing springs make it an eyot of greenery amid the seas of sand." — *Fouard.*

THE LEGEND OF PAUL AND THEKLA. This famous story is a later legend, but is very likely based on truth. Thekla, the daughter of a noble Iconium family, is represented as sitting at a window in her mother's house and overhearing the preaching of Paul in a neighboring house. Deeply moved, she became a Christian. Thamyris, her betrothed lover, thereupon accused Paul of being a magician and using his power to dissuade women from marriage. Paul was imprisoned, scourged, and then expelled from Iconium. Thekla, bribing the jailer, visited Paul in prison, and was instructed by him in the Christian faith. She was found there by her mother and lover, and was condemned to be burned to death in the theatre. She was put upon the pyre, but the flames refused to burn her. Then a storm came on, quenched the fire, and killed many of the spectators. Later she was thrown to the wild beasts, but a lioness crouched at her feet and defended her from a lion and a bear, dying in Thekla's defence. She suffered many more trials, but finally joined Paul in his missionary travels, and at last made her home near Seleucia, where she led the life of a nun till her death at the age of ninety. This very ancient story is of especial interest because it contains what may be a true description of the appearance of Paul: "Bald, bow-legged, strongly built, small in stature; with large eyes and meeting eyebrows and longish nose; full of grace; sometimes looking like a man, sometimes having the face of an angel."

At Iconium, still, as always, making his first plea before the Jews, Paul preached in the synagogue, and so effectively that **a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.**

2. But "never yet has a great work been done for Jesus without the provocation of many adversaries." — *William M. Taylor.* **The unbelieving Jews** (R. V., "dis-

8. And there sat a certain man at Lÿs'tra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked:

obedient" to the truth) **stirred up the Gentiles.** "The story of Thekla suggests a means, and perhaps the apostles were brought before the magistrates on some charge of interference with family life." — *Rackham.*

3. **Long time therefore abode they**, perhaps six months. They would not leave their converts to withstand persecution alone, and they would remain long enough to prove the falseness of the charges against themselves. They would not retreat under fire. **Speaking boldly in the Lord.** In the Lord's strength and in the Lord's cause.

4. **But the multitude of the city was divided**, as Christ had prophesied would be the case, Luke 12 : 51–53. To have aroused such dissensions would of itself be enough to turn the city authorities against the apostles. When it became the evident intention to assail the apostles, perhaps by scourging in the synagogue, and to stone them, the Jewish penalty for blasphemy, they fled, "as Christ had directed, Matt. 10 : 23. Prudence is the twin of true courage." — *Abbott.*

Illustration. "Persecution is God's way of bidding his soldiers march. Just as the gale beats on the falling rain, and drives it away till it falls on distant fields, so persecution, striking on the gospel, carries it to unexpected spots." — *Rev. G. H. Morrison.* This time it drove Paul to **Lystra**, eighteen miles south-southwest of Iconium, and then to **Derbe**, twenty miles southeast of Lystra. **Cities of Lycaonia**, or "Wolf-land," the name being supposed to be derived from Lycaon, who was transformed into a wolf — a name well befitting the inhabitants. The missionaries went thither "as sheep in the midst of wolves" (Matt. 10 : 16). Lycaonia was part of the Roman province of Galatia. "The highlands which go to make up this district are dreary and swept by chilly winds; the steppes stretch out on every hand in all their naked barrenness — marshy in winter, in summer baked and cracked by the sun." —*Fouard.* Ovid, who had seen it, describes it thus (*Met.* VIII. 621):

"Where men once dwelt a marshy lake is seen,
And coots and bitterns haunt the waters green."

Few Jews were there, as no synagogue is mentioned. "Now for the first time the gospel comes into direct and immediate contact and conflict with heathenism." — *Taylor.* Yet in this unpromising region Paul made one notable convert, the lad Timothy, who was then about fifteen years old, and who afterwards became Paul's efficient helper. The missionaries may have lodged at Lystra in the house of Timothy's mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois.

II. **A VICTORY OF FAITH IN LYSTRA**, vs. 8–10. Lystra, the capital of Lycaonia, "was planted on a small hill in the midst of a pleasant valley." — *Ramsay.* It was a Roman colony. "As there was no synagogue, probably at Lystra there was a nearer approach to modern out-of-door preaching than hitherto."—*Rackham.*

From a photograph.

Distant View of Lystra from the Southeast.

8. **There sat a certain man at Lystra.** He sat on the ground, perhaps in the market-place, or before the temple of Jupiter. **Who never had walked.** "The miracle was more like one of creation than of restoration." — *Burrell.* "He was no mendicant pretender, but one whose history was well known." — *Ramsay.*

9. **The same heard Paul speak** (R. V., "speaking"), habitually. The cripple may have heard of the signs and wonders wrought by Paul at Iconium (v. 3), and the missionary was probably telling about Christ's miracles of healing. "It all came home

9. The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,

10. Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

11. And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lȳcaō′nĭa, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

12. And they called Bär′năbas, Jū′pĭtĕr; and Paul, Mĕrcū′rĭŭs, because he was the chief speaker.

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to the poor cripple, as he lay there listening in deep consciousness of his one great need, and his eyes were lit with a new-born hope." — *Dean Furneaux.* **Who stedfastly beholding him** (R. V., "fastening his eyes upon him"), "with that straining, earnest gaze, so frequently ascribed to Paul, which some have thought was due to a weakness of sight remaining ever since his blindness at the time of his conversion." — *Cambridge Bible.* Compare Acts 13 : 9 ; 23 : 1. **And perceiving that he had faith to be healed.** "I know from my own experience," said the great preacher, Spurgeon, "that it is no uncommon thing for some one individual to arrest the preacher's attention." "Our Saviour was always on the lookout for faith, and Paul had caught this secret from the Master. There is nothing like love and fellowship with Christ for revealing the best points in a poor beggar's face." — *Morrison.*

10. **Said with a loud voice.** "The only instance in the New Testament where a healing word was thus spoken." — *Gilbert.* **Stand upright on thy feet.** "A strange command this was to a man who had never used his feet at all, and an unbeliever would have laughed at it ; but the believing cripple *tried* to stand, and found that he *could*." — *Rev. B. T. Vincent.*

CRIPPLES AND FAITH. "Let no man worship the body; let no man despise it. It is God's work, and one day he will glorify it. But the soul is more." — *Burrell.* It is worse, infinitely worse, to have a crippled soul than the most deformed body; but that also Christ will heal if we take it to him in faith.

III. **POPULARITY IN LYSTRA**, vs. 11–18. 11. **When the people** (R. V., "the multitudes") **saw what Paul had done.** "The apostles appear to have retired (v. 14) after the cure." — *Furneaux.* **They lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia.** In their excitement they used their rude native dialect, which Paul would not understand even if he were present. The missionaries spoke in Greek, which was everywhere understood. **The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.** Ancient literature is full of stories telling how

> "the gods
> Put on the form of strangers from afar,
> And walk our towns in many different shapes,
> To mark the good and evil deeds of men."
> — *Homer, Odyssey,* XVII., 485 *sq.*

Ovid in his *Metamorphoses* beautifully relates how Jupiter and Mercury visited this very Lycaonia. The inhospitable people thought them to be poor vagrants, refused to entertain them, ridiculed and maltreated them. At last they came to the hut of the poor peasants, Baucis and Philemon, who received them cordially and entertained them with the best they had. In return, the gods transformed their hut into a glorious temple over which they were set as the chief ministers of worship, while the churlish neighbors were punished by a terrible flood which overwhelmed them. Ewald suggests that this story may have been recited annually at the great festival in Lystra at the temple of Jupiter. "There may have been another Philemon in this crowd ; there was one at Colossæ, not very far off." — *Professor Lindsay.*

ANTICIPATIONS OF CHRIST. All this is "a noticeable evidence of the world's preparedness to welcome its deliverer from heaven." — *Dean Trench.* "The legends of paganism are unconscious prophecies — witnesses of the deep, unsatisfied longing to which the incarnation of Christ is the answer." — *Furneaux.* "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

12. **And they called Barnabas, Jupiter** (Greek, Zeus), probably because he was the older, more dignified and imposing man, and less active. **And Paul, Mercurius** (R. V., "Mercury," Greek, Hermes, the messenger of the gods), **because he was the chief speaker.** Also because, perhaps, of his slighter, more graceful form, and his greater

13. Then the priest of Jū'pĭtēr, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.

14. *Which* when the apostles, Bär'năbas and Paul, heard *of*, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

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youthfulness. Compare Gal. 4 : 14, " Ye received me as a messenger of God." Mercury, the herald, was also the god of oratory. " An inscription recently found near Lystra groups together the same two deities." — *Ramsay.*

Illustration. A deputation from the American Board was visiting the mission stations of South Africa, and was passing through a village where there was no missionary. In the party was the saintly Dr. E. E. Strong, whose face manifested his beautiful and powerful Christian character. The blacks scrutinized the visitors keenly, but when they saw Dr. Strong they said, " He must be their god! "

13. **Then the priest of Jupiter**, ready to turn the occasion to his own profit, **which** (R. V., " whose temple ") **was before the city.** " Enshrined in the temple outside the gate as the protecting deity." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **Brought oxen and garlands.** " Ropes of red roses, blue convolvulus, scarlet geraniums, and lilies of white and gold, fastened with myrtle and bay leaves, were wreathed around the glossy bodies and thick necks of the oxen, and twined about their shining horns." — *Robert Bird.* **Unto the gates.** The city gates, where the temple was ; or perhaps the temple gates, or the doors of the house in which Paul and Barnabas were staying. **And would have done sacrifice**, giving the apostles divine honors. " This meant (1) to cut the throats of the oxen, (2) to receive the blood in a bowl, (3) then to pour it on an altar." — *Lindsay.*

14. **Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of.** Probably some of their converts brought them the news. " Barnabas is mentioned first because the

Raphael.

Paul and Barnabas at Lystra.

(From the tapestry designed for the Sistine Chapel, Rome.)

(Cartoon in South Kensington Museum, London.)

sacrifice was primarily intended for him." — *Weiss.* **They rent their clothes**, " though doubtless without two coats." — *Jefferson.* They expressed their horror " in Oriental fashion by tearing their outer garment at the breast, perhaps to the waist." — *Geikie.* Compare Matt. 26 : 65.

A Temptation. It is often a sore temptation to do evil that good may come, as merchants are eager to provide for their families by dishonest gains, or statesmen to

15. And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

16. Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.

17. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

18. And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

19. And there came thither *certain* Jews from Ăn'tĭŏch and Icōn'ĭŭm, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

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obtain a noble result by ignoble means. So Paul might use for Christ the tremendous influence he would gain by pretending to be a god. But he felt "very much as Bishop Patteson might have felt if he had seen some Melanesians preparing to hold a cannibal feast in his honor." — *Plumptre.*

15. We also are men of like passions with you. "Better, *of like nature.*" — *Prof. M. R. Vincent.* Compare their actions with the ready acceptance with which Herod allowed himself to be hailed as divine, Acts 12 : 22, 23. **Turn from these vanities** (R. V., "vain things," that is, idols) **unto the living God.** Compare Paul's similar expressions in 1 Cor. 8 : 4 ; 1 Thess. 1 : 9.

16. Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. "He made no miraculous interference to correct their errors. He left them to themselves because he wished to demonstrate their inability to find their way back to him without his aid." — *Taylor.* Compare Paul's similar words to the men of Athens, Acts 17 : 30 ; see also 1 Cor. 1 : 21.

17. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness. This thought Paul expanded in Rom. 1 : 18–21. Even without a supernatural revelation, God and his laws are disclosed in nature. "We can heartily echo the wise saying, 'Nature could no more have made me than Fashion could have made the coat I wear' ; we can still look up to the starry sky and say, 'It must have had a Maker.'" — *Dean Vaughn.* **In that he . . . gave us** (R. V., "you") **rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons.** Jupiter, whom they had supposed Barnabas to be, "was lord of the air. He dispensed the thunder and lightning, the rain and the hail, the rivers and tempests. The mention of rain is appropriate, as there was a scarcity of water in Lycaonia." — *Professor Vincent.* One traveller found drinking water sold at a higher price than milk. "Had it been Jews whom Paul was called to speak to, you would have had plenty of texts from the Old Testament. Had the crowd been an Athenian crowd, there would have been swift appeals to history and art. It shows the infinite tact of the apostle that with these rude folk he argued from the rain." — *Morrison.*

GOD THE GIVER OF FOOD. "Taking the world altogether, it never has more than about three months' provision of grain in its garner. The failure of a single harvest all over the world would depopulate the earth. It has never enough laid up at any one time to keep it from starving during the ensuing four months. It would seem to be evident that God does not intend that men should become independent of him." — *Rev. S. D. McConnell, D.D.*

IV. **TRIBULATION IN LYSTRA**, vs. 19, 20. **19. There came thither certain Jews from Antioch** (in Pisidia) **and Iconium.** Probably they were travelling merchants, encountering Paul and Barnabas by chance. **Who persuaded the people.** Aristotle, Cicero, and other classic writers mention the fickleness of the Galatians (Gal. 1 : 6). Compare the change in the feelings of the Jerusalem crowd toward Jesus, passing in one day from "Hosanna!" to "Crucify him!" Compare also the sudden change in the minds of the people of Malta, Acts 28 : 4–6. These Jewish merchants "calumniated the missionaries doubtless, as their nation had calumniated the Lord himself, ascribing his mighty works to the powers of darkness." — *Canon Norris.* **And, having stoned Paul.** "Paul, as the more active of the pair." — *Ramsay.* The apostle alludes to this stoning in 2 Cor. 11 : 25, and probably in Gal. 6 : 17. As ston-

20. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Bär'năbas to Dĕr'be.

ing was a peculiarly Jewish mode of punishment, the Jews were probably the leaders of the mob. Stephen was stoned outside Jerusalem for fear of polluting the Holy City; but the Jews would not consider Lystra sacred, and so they stoned Paul within the city. It was an illegal act, as Paul was a Roman citizen. As the stones crashed upon him, what memories of the stoning of Stephen ten or eleven years before must have passed through Paul's mind! **Drew** (R. V., "dragged") **him out of the city**, since to leave the body within the walls would have involved the mob leaders with the city authorities. **Supposing he had been** (R. V., "that he was") **dead**, "as persecutors have often since supposed that they had slain the truth." — *Lindsay.* "Luke shows no disposition to easy belief in miracles. He does not know that Paul was dead; his medical skill familiarized him with protracted states of unconsciousness." — *Maclaren.*

20. As the disciples stood round about him. "It speaks volumes for both Paul and his converts that they did not leave him even in this extremity." — *Geikie.* "We can imagine how tenderly Barnabas would pillow the head of his friend upon a cloak, as he dashed water in his face and called him by his name." — *Bird.* "Eunice and Lois were there with tender womanly ministrations; and young Timothy, as he looked down on the pale and bleeding face, felt his heart forever knit to the hero who had courage to suffer to the death for his faith." — *Prof. James Stalker.* Just before his death Paul reminded Timothy of this terrible experience (2 Tim. 3 : 11). **He rose up.** This sudden recovery was wonderful, even if he had only been stunned. **And came into the city.** We may imagine the "gentle hands and loving ministrations all through the night, bathing and dressing his many wounds and bruises, and cheering him with words of deepest sympathy." — *Prof. J. W. McGarvey.* **The next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.** "With" implies "with the assistance of Barnabas." — *Rackham.* "It is grievous to think of one who had been so cruelly treated forced to make his way for twenty miles with his life in his hand, and still all battered and bleeding from the horrible attack of the day before." — *Farrar.* That he was able to make the journey at all would point to an almost miraculous recovery. Derbe was the frontier city of Galatia on the southeast. "A long bare slope, with bushes and loose stones scattered over it, and a few ruined buildings of comparatively modern date, lead up to a broad low mound which crowns it; and under this, in all probability, lie the remains of the Derbe of Paul." — *Geikie.*

A WORKMANLIKE CLOSE OF THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY, vs. 21–28. **21. When they had preached the gospel to that city.** Vaughan translates, "*Having evangelized that city* — the tense implies a successful and somewhat complete work." Probably they spent the winter there. **And had taught many** (R. V., "made many disciples"). Among them was doubtless the Gaius of Derbe (Acts 20 : 4) who afterwards accompanied Paul on his last visit to Jerusalem. **They returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch.** Paul was only 160 miles from his native Tarsus, which was easily reached from Derbe through the famous Cilician Gates. But he resisted the temptation to return as Mark had returned, for probably the converts in Galatia were persecuted and needed comfort, and in any event they were beginners in the Christian life and needed instruction. The missionaries faced much danger in returning, but, though driven out of these cities,

The Countries Paul visited on his first and second journeys.

they had not been permanently exiled, new magistrates had been elected, and on this visit they doubtless worked quietly among the converts already made rather than aroused opposition by public preaching.

25. After visiting on this wise errand the cities where they had toiled and suffered, they went down to Attalia, so called from its builder, Attalus II. Philadelphus, king of Pergamus; now called Adalia. They reached it by a sixteen-mile walk across the plain from Perga. "From this city, centuries after, the two great armies of the Crusaders, having come through parts of the same districts over which Paul and Barnabas travelled, embarked, like them, for Antioch in Syria." — *Conybeare and Howson.*

THE FIRST MISSIONARY MEETING was assembled at Antioch to hear the report of Paul and Barnabas. This report was most encouraging.

1. They had been gone probably two years (Ramsay).

2. They had visited Cyprus, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia, travelling about 1400 miles.

3. They had preached in the largest cities of these regions, and had founded churches wherever they went, organizing them on a permanent footing.

4. They had gone first to the synagogues and preached to the Jews, winning many converts and making many bitter enemies.

5. The force of circumstances as well as the promptings of the Holy Spirit had led them to extend the good news to the Gentiles, many of whom had gladly accepted it. This was the greatest forward step since Christ's ascension.

6. They had won some notable leaders, such as Timothy and Gaius.

7. They had shown how Christians can endure persecution, and thus had set an inspiring example for the church through all ages.

8. They had set on foot the vast enterprise of foreign missions, and thus the first missionary journey, though covering a restricted field, "had as great results both for preachers and people as any other had." — *Prof. James Iverach.*

LESSON IX. — May 28.

THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM. — Acts 15:1–35.

PRINT VS. 22–33. COMMIT VS. 32, 33.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *For freedom did Christ set us free.* — GAL. 5:1 A.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

This lesson lends itself well to a debate. At the outset you may divide the class into two sides, appointing leaders, and having them "choose up." Tell the pupils the subject of the coming debate: "Resolved, that the Mosaic law should not have been imposed upon the Gentile Christians." Tell each side to watch for points throughout the recitation, and as you proceed be sure to suggest an abundance of ideas for each side, as given in these notes. Leave ample time at the close for speeches by all the members of the class, on their respective sides.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — About 50 A.D., as is commonly agreed, though various scholars place it earlier.

Place. — Antioch in Syria, and Jerusalem.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 32, 33; Phil. 2:2, 3; 1 John 1:7.

THE ROUND TABLE.

Mischief-makers, and how to treat them.
What the Mosaic law did for the world.
The liberty for which Paul contended.
James: a character sketch.
The dangers of idolatry.
How to settle disputes.
The first church council as a model for us.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Acts and on Gal. 2. An unusual view in Furneaux's *Acts of the Apostles.* Chapters in works on Peter, by Taylor, Thomas, Birks, etc. Also in Farrar's *St. Paul,* Thatcher's *The Apostolic Church,* Weinel's *St. Paul,* Ramsay's *Galatians,* Baring-Gould's *St. Paul.* Matheson's *Spiritual Development of St. Paul,* chap. VII. Geikie's *New Testament Hours,* chap. XIV. Fraser's *Speeches of the Holy Apostles.* "Paul as

a Controversialist," in Whyte's *Bible Characters, Stephen to Timothy. The Apostolic Age*, by Ropes. Mrs. Kingsley's *Paul, a Herald of the Cross*, chap. XXX.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Way to Settle Differences.

I. A Serious Division of Opinion, vs. 1–6.
II. Peter Gives His Experience, vs. 7–11.
III. Paul and Barnabas State the Facts, v. 12.
IV. James Renders a Wise Decision, vs. 13–21.
V. The Decision in Writing, a Brotherly Message, vs. 22–29.
VI. The Message Delivered and the Difference Settled, vs. 30–35.

The Way to Settle Differences.

I. **A SERIOUS DIVISION OF OPINION**, vs. 1–6. "What would have become of Christianity as a religion for the world, if it had been tied forever to the ceremonial law, and made a mere offshoot of Judaism?" — *Dean Vaughan.* At the start many Christians, and those of great influence, wished to do this very thing. Our lesson pictures the struggle between them and the wiser, more liberal party; and no more important struggle is recorded in the history of the church.

1. **Certain men.** Luke does not consider them worth naming. Paul (Gal. 2:4) calls them "false brethren." **Came down** (to Antioch in Syria) **from Judæa.** "They had no mandate to lay down the law as they did. Luke delicately suggests this by saying that they 'came down from Judæa,' rather than from Jerusalem." — *Alexander Maclaren.* **Taught the brethren.** "They mingled in the assembly of the local Christians, using the synagogue privilege of rising and speaking." — *Geikie.* **And said, except ye be circumcised, ye cannot be saved.** Circumcision stood to a Jew for the observance of all the ceremonial law. "Among the Jews every minute particular of ordinary life was the subject of religious prescriptions. The Jew must bear on his person the mark of a holy observance, must perform endless cleansings of a more or less formal nature, must repeat, at prescribed times, each day, so many prescribed prayers, must eat and drink only prescribed supports and refreshments, prepared in prescribed modes, and must perform prescribed pilgrimages, from any adopted country, however distant, to the national shrine at Jerusalem." — *Geikie.* Must the Gentile Christians submit to all this? The success of the first missionary journey, adding many Gentiles to the church, made the question acute. "We may regard it as almost certain that already the larger part of the Christian Church was Gentile." — *Sir William Ramsay.*

The Arguments for the Pharisees. We must try to put ourselves in the place of these Pharisaic Christians, who felt very deeply the truth of their position. They argued as follows: 1. The Jews were the chosen people of God, who had marked them for himself by the solemn rite of circumcision and by other laws, none of which had been abrogated. 2. Jesus himself, the latest revelation of God's will, was a Jew. He had been circumcised, and had kept all the Jewish laws, bidding his followers also be true to them. 3. All the promises of the Messiah were made to the Jews, through whom the redemption of the world was to come. 4. There were great social and religious differences between the Jews and the Gentiles, which made it very hard for them to work together in one church. Adopting the same rites and customs would tend toward harmony. 5. Few things were required of the Gentiles, as these Pharisees thought, and infinite blessings were offered in return. It seemed ungrateful in them not to meet the conditions. 6. Circumcision would be a test of sincerity. If entrance to the church were made too easy, unworthy members would join it.

2. **Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation** (R. V., "questioning") **with them.** "So untrue is it that the days of primitive Christianity were days of peace and unity, and that only in these latter days has the church been divided!" — *Canon Norris.* "Fortunately for all after time the Judaizing emissaries encountered at Antioch an able, resolute, and clear-sighted opponent in the apostle Paul." — *Prof. J. H. Ropes.* His arguments would run about as follows:

The Arguments for the Gentiles. 1. Christianity was from God as well as Judaism, and Christ's authority was higher than that of Moses. 2. In many respects, as in Sabbath-keeping and the washing of hands, Christ laid down a law of liberty which abrogated Jewish formalism, and he bade his followers preach his gospel to all mankind. 3. The true glory and influence of Judaism consisted in its insistence upon in-

ward holiness and not in its outward observances. 4. Harmony in the Christian church is based upon oneness of loyalty to Christ and not upon uniformity of ritual and religious customs. 5. Any requirement laid upon the Gentiles was to be resisted, no matter how slight, if it was not a requirement of Christ. Only what Christ laid down as essential should be regarded as essential by his followers. 6. There was no need of circumcision merely for a test of sincerity ; persecution and worldly opposition would furnish tests enough. 7. No one objected to the practice of circumcision and to other Jewish laws and customs if they were not forced upon those that did not find them helpful, but were merely used freely by those to whom they appealed as useful in the Christian life. When religious forms are matters of compulsion they cease to be sincere and become hypocrisies.

A WISE PROCEDURE. The dispute, if allowed to go on, might have disrupted the church of Christ, which needed its united strength to face the coming persecutions. Therefore very wisely **they** (" the brethren," v. 1) **determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them**. Perhaps Luke ; certainly Titus (Gal. 2 : 1), who afterwards became Paul's missionary companion. " Titus was perhaps a Cretan Gentile whom Paul had converted at Cyprus during his first journey." — *Farrar*. He would serve as a sample of the Gentile converts, being a man of godliness and of great ability. **Should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.** Paul claimed equal authority with the apostles, and may well have hesitated to submit the case to them. " But a voice said, ' You are always preaching about love, long-suffering, and unity. Now practise as you preach. Submit and go up to Jerusalem.' " — *Professor H. Weinel*.

3. **Being brought on their way by the church**. They were escorted by members of the Antioch church, as a mark of affection and honor, probably as far as Seleucia, the port of Antioch. **They passed** (probably on foot) **through Phenice** (R. V., " Phœnicia," where, at Tyre and Sidon, they doubtless found many Christians) **and**

Coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

Samaria. " The course of the apostles was along the great Roman road which followed the Phœnician coastline, and traces of which are still seen in the cliffs overhanging the sea." — *Conybeare and Howson*. Crossing the Plain of Esdraelon, they journeyed south through Samaria. **Declaring the conversion of the Gentiles**, in the missionary tour from which they had recently returned. **And they caused great joy unto all the brethren**, " an earnest of victory in the coming discussion which must have encouraged the hearts of both." — *Geikie*. Thus Luther was encouraged on the way to the Diet of Worms.

4. Arrived at **Jerusalem**, and perhaps lodging at the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, **they were received of the church**. " The Greek verb implies a cordial welcome." — *Prof. M. R. Vincent*. **And of the apostles**. Peter and James were there (Gal. 2 : 9), and also John — the only time John and Paul met, so far as is recorded. **They declared all things that God had done with them**, modestly giving God all the glory. " It was a thrilling story which they told, and it must have drawn many tears from the eyes of the sympathizing audience, while it aroused them to fresh enthusiasm in the cause of human redemption." — *Prof. J. W. McGarvey*. If, as the majority of commentators think, this is the meeting described by Paul in Gal. 2 : 9 (but Ramsay thinks that meeting was earlier), a partition of work was decided upon, Paul and Barnabas to go to the Gentiles and the other apostles to the Jews.

5. But the conference decision was not allowed to go unchallenged. **There rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed**; that is, were Christians. It seems indeed strange to see in Christ's church representatives of the sect that had opposed Christ so bitterly during his life on earth; but Paul himself had been a Pharisee of the Pharisees. **Saying, that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.** "None are so blind as those to whom religion is mainly a matter of ritual." — *Maclaren.* "If the Pharisaic party had triumphed, the Christian church would have been buried in the grave of Judaism." — *Abbott.* They seem to have made a test case of Titus, demanding (Gal. 2 : 3) that he be circumcised and become a Jewish proselyte.

6. **And the apostles and elders.** "The whole church" (v. 22) seems to have been present. "That they could thus come together in one chamber shows that, by flight from the old persecutions, or by removals, or return to distant homes, the number of Christians actually in Jersualem was not very large." — *Geikie.* **Came together for to consider of this matter.** "We may picture the scene thus. At the upper end of 'the upper room' of Acts 1 : 13, or of some Christian 'synagogue,' sat the apostles and presbyters facing the multitude. In the centre of the semicircle was the chair of James, the president of the church of Jerusalem; on his right were sitting St. Peter and St. John, on his left St. Barnabas and St. Paul with the other delegates from Antioch." — *Rackham.* "It was the first gathering of the universal Church, and it met to decide the most momentous question ever submitted to a Christian assembly." — *Prof. James Iverach.* "The fate of Christianity hung on the result." — *Ropes.* If repulsed, Paul could hardly have failed to establish a separate Church of the Gentiles, and we should have had two warring Christianities — two failures instead of one glorious success.

II. **PETER GIVES HIS EXPERIENCE**, vs. 7–11. 7. **When there had been much disputing** (R. V., "questioning"). "Men who are in error can never be convinced that they are wrong by denying them freedom of speech." — *McGarvey.* Powder burned loose on the rock in the open air makes a great blaze and smoke, but does little harm. That powder confined in a rock produces an earthquake, or shatters a mountain. Liberty of discussion is not only right, but it is the only safe way. **Peter rose up**, "the rugged fisherman whose arms sheltered Jesus, who toiled and wept and prayed with him, and who questioned him on this very thing." — *Robert Bird.* "Note how he waited his time before interposing in the discussion, no longer, as in old days, determined to be first." — *Rev. W. H. Griffith Thomas.* **A good while ago**, perhaps six years, **God made choice among us.** In this reference to the conversion of Cornelius, in which he had been opposed by many of those present, "there is a kind of exultant tone. Peter is about to bring every one to recognize that he has been in the right." — *Prof. O. J. Thatcher.*

Fra Bartolommeo.

St. Peter.

8. **God, which knoweth the hearts**, "the heart-knowing God," "a solemn and searching word." — *Vaughan.* "Used by Peter alone in the New Testament as an epithet of God." — *Canon Knowling.* **Bare them witness**, by the outpouring of his Holy Spirit upon them, as upon the Jews.

Illustration. "It is the sovereign's stamp which settles the question as to the right of a coin to be counted current among loyal subjects of that sovereign. When God puts his stamp of approval on a man, or on a woman, or on a movement, that fact ought to weigh beyond any individual opinion." — *Henry Clay Trumbull.*

9. **Put no difference** (R. V., " made no distinction ") **between us and them.** This difference the Jews proudly made continually between themselves and the Gentiles. *Illustrations.* Thus Shakespeare makes Shylock the Jew say in *The Merchant of Venice:* " I will buy with you, sell with you, walk with you, talk with you, and so following ; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you."

" A Hindoo cannot eat with a Parsee or a Mohammedan ; and among the Hindoos themselves, the meals of a Brahmin are polluted by the presence of a Pariah, though they meet and have free intercourse in the ordinary transactions of business." — *Conybeare and Howson.*

Purifying their hearts by faith, faith in the unseen Christ ; thus purified, they had no need of the elaborate ceremonial purifications of the Jews.

10. **Now therefore why tempt ye God.** " Why do ye try experiments upon his mercy and forbearance ? " — *Vaughan.* To insist upon further requirements after God had shown his approval of the Gentiles would " be claiming that he had given his Spirit to unworthy persons." — *Weiss.* **To put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples.** " Peter recalls our Lord's words about these Pharisaical observances (Matt. 23:4). Paul's words could not be stronger (Gal. 5 : 1)." — *Professor Lindsay.*

11. **Through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ**, and through that alone, not through outward observances, **we shall be saved, even as** (R. V., " in like manner as ") **they.** " Peter's last words, as recorded in the Acts, are a fitting crown to all he has said and done." — *Iverach.* " He showed that he was in full sympathy with the work of St. Paul, and had helped to make the way open for him." — *Rev. John Davidson.* If the scene of Gal. 2 : 11–21 is later than these events, Peter relapsed from these sentiments under pressure and Paul was compelled to rebuke him ; but 2 Pet. 3 : 15, 16 shows the abiding love between them.

III. **PAUL AND BARNABAS STATE THE FACTS**, v. 12. " We can imagine the feelings of at least one person during this debate. With St. Paul this was a struggle of life and death for truth." — *Dean Vaughan.* **Then all the multitude kept silence**, being profoundly moved by Peter's reminder of how the Holy Spirit had come upon Cornelius and his company. This was Paul's chance, which he promptly seized. **And gave audience to** (R. V., " hearkened unto ") **Barnabas and Paul**, " the former being again mentioned first, because he had originally been a member of this congregation." — *Professor Weiss.* " A forger could scarcely have thought of this trifle." — *Prof. J. M. Stifler.* **Rehearsing what miracles** (R. V., " signs ") **and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.** Two specimens have been related, the blinding of Elymas and the healing of the life-long cripple at Lystra. John Mark, who was doubtless present, would testify to the first. The story was so impressive that the Pharisees had not a word to say (v. 13).

IV. **JAMES RENDERS A WISE DECISION**, vs. 13–21. 13. **James answered.** This was James the Just, the brother of our Lord, writer of the Epistle and bishop of the Jerusalem church. It is the tradition that he always wore fine white linen from head to foot, and that he spent so much time in prayer that his knees became hard as a camel's. He may have been appointed to the place among the Twelve held by James the martyr. " From his letter and from the whole tradition that he left behind him, James must have been thoroughly Jewish." — *Thatcher.*

14. **Simeon** (R. V., " Symeon ") **hath declared.** James characteristically uses the old Jewish form of Simon Peter's name. He wisely bases his speech on agreed facts. " How much Christian narrowness would be blown to atoms if its advocates would do as James did, and let God's facts teach them the width of God's purposes and the comprehensiveness of Christ's church! We do wisely when we square our theories with facts ; but many of us go to work in the opposite way, and snip down facts to the dimension of our theories." — *Maclaren.*

15. **To this agree the words of the prophets.** It is characteristic of this Hebrew of the Hebrews that he bases his argument upon the Bible ; in this he sets us all a noble example. He quotes freely from the Greek (Septuagint) translation of Amos 9 : 11, 12. **After this**, namely, after the predicted fall of the Jewish nation and its captivity, **I will return.** God would restore the nation to a greater glory, so that it would include **the residue of men** outside the Jewish nation, even **all the Gentiles, upon whom God's name is called**, — that is, not those that remain heathen in heart, but those that call upon God in faith. James saw a fulfilment of Amos's prophecy in the Gentile converts reported by Paul and Barnabas.

19. **My sentence** (R. V., " judgement ") **is, that we trouble not** these Gentile Christians. James " put a motion," as we would say. " It is exactly the line to be

22. Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to An'tĭoch with Paul and Bär'năbas; *namely*, Judas surnamed Bär'săbas, and Sī'las, chief men among the brethren:

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expected of the downright common sense of the child-like fisherman." — *New Century Bible.*

20. That they abstain from pollutions of idols, defined in v. 29 as (R.V.) "things sacrificed to idols," " the flesh of idol sacrifices, of which whatever was not eaten by the worshippers at the feasts in the temples, or given to the priests, was sold in the markets and eaten at home." — *Vincent.* The Jews would not touch this meat, and social intercourse with the Gentile Christians would not be free from offense unless these meats were barred. **And from fornication.** " In pagan circles immorality and religion were almost convertible terms, and the rites connected with the worship of Aphrodite and Cybele actually consecrated vice." — *Prof. H. T. Andrews.* We owe our modern comparative freedom from this curse solely to Christianity. **And from things strangled.** " The flesh of animals killed in snares, and whose blood was not poured forth, was forbidden to the Israelites." — *Vincent.* See Lev. 17 : 13, 14. **And from blood.** The heathen " were fond of flesh from which the blood had not been extracted, and even drank blood mingled with wine. In order to preserve the blood in the flesh it was the custom to strangle the animals. For the Jew this was an offense, because, according to his conceptions, the blood was the seat of the soul, that is, of the life." — *Thatcher.* See Lev. 3 : 17 ; 7 : 26 ; 17 : 10–12 ; Deut. 12 : 23, 24, etc.

21. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him. " Since the law had long been read among the dispersed Jews in their synagogues and was thus dear to them, it was necessary that no offensive customs should be continued by the Gentile Christians, because thereby the extension of the gospel among Jews would be grievously hindered." — *Prof. H. P. Forbes.* Moreover, this wide spread of Mosaic teaching had familiarized the Gentiles with it, and Paul's converts would be willing to adopt these simple rules.

V. **THE DECISION IN WRITING, A BROTHERLY MESSAGE**, vs. 22–29.

22. Then pleased it the apostles and elders. The motion made by James does not seem to have been put to vote, but the procedure " resembled that which is still in vogue in the Society of Friends. No vote is ever taken amongst the Friends, but after full discussion the president states what he considers to be the sense of the meeting, and unless his statement is challenged, it is recorded as the decision of the Society." — *Andrews.* **To send chosen men of their own company to Antioch.** These would explain the letter, would give dignity and weight to the matter, and would reciprocate the honor paid the Jerusalem church by the Antioch Christians in sending their leaders to consult them, and not merely a letter. Moreover, these delegates would confirm the report of Paul and Barnabas, which otherwise might be suspected of a bias toward their own well-known views. It is always best to conduct business in person. **Judas surnamed Barsabas** (R. V., " Barsabbas "). Perhaps " a brother of that Joseph Barsabbas who had been a candidate at the election of the apostle to succeed Judas Iscariot, Acts 1 : 23." — *Weiss.* **And Silas**, short form of " Silvanus," Paul's companion in his second missionary journey. " It looks as though the former represented the more Hebraic side of the Jerusalem church, the latter the Hellenistic, so that together they would carry conviction to the two parties at Antioch." — *New Century Bible.*

A Parchment Roll.
Open and written in columns.

23. And they wrote letters by them. — It is always wise to put conclusions in writing. The letter (1) clarified and unified judgment in the preparation of it ; (2) guarded against slips of memory on the part of the envoys ; (3) prevented misunderstandings ; (4) preserved for future occasions the results of the conference. It was written in the name of **the apostles and elders and brethren** (R. V. " and the elder brethren "), and was addressed **to the brethren which**

23. And they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles, and elders, and brethren, *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gĕn′tiles in Ăn′tĭŏch, and Sўr′ĭă, and Cĭlĭ′cĭă:

24. Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment:

25. It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you, with our beloved Bär′năbas and Paul,

26. Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27. We have sent therefore Jū′das and Sī′las, who shall also tell *you* the same things by mouth.

28. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:

29. That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

30. So when they were dismissed, they came to Ăn′tĭŏch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle:

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are of the Gentiles (note the kind word, "brethren") **in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia.** We have not before heard of the churches in Syria and Cilicia; the former may have sprung from the Antioch church and the latter have been founded by Paul during his long stay in Tarsus.

24. The letter opens with a frank statement of the difficulty and an equally frank repudiation of the troublers who had gone from Jerusalem to Antioch. **Subverting your souls.** A rare verb meaning to dismantle. "The idea is that of turning the minds of the Gentile converts upside down; throwing them into confusion like a dismantled house." — *Vincent.* A good picture of meddlesome busybodies. **To whom we gave no such commandment.** The R. V. strengthens this by omitting "such."

25. Being assembled with one accord. This states, rather, the unanimity of their conclusions, "having come to one accord" (R. V.).

26. Men that have hazarded their lives. "The sufferings of the missionaries in their first journey were evidently well known, and appeal was fittingly made to them in recognition of their self-sacrifice, and in proof of their sincerity." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.*

28. It seemed good to the Holy Ghost. "The whole church lived under the shadow of Pentecost; the possession of the Holy Spirit was what made men Christians; they lived and thought and spoke under the guidance of the Spirit, just as we should do now, if we had their simple faith." — *Lindsay.* **And to us.** "The addition of these words shows that the Spirit did not force himself upon the church by an irresistible revelation. The faithful deliberated, and listened to clashing opinions." — *Dean Furneaux.* **These necessary things.** Idolatry and fornication were abominable sins to which the Gentile converts would be particularly exposed; eating blood and things strangled was an offense to the Jews which would prevent the social communion necessary if Jew and Gentile were to be one church.

29. Ye shall do well. R. V., "it shall be well with you"; these restrictions were in the interest of the Gentiles quite as much as of the Jews. **Fare ye well.** "The customary conclusion of epistles. Compare Acts 23:30. The literal meaning is *Be ye strong.*" — *Abbott.* "Such was the great charter of the church's liberties, as finally settled by the mother church of Jerusalem. Happy had the universal church been if a spirit of equal wisdom had always presided in her councils, or a spirit of equal simplicity been everywhere diffused through her congregations." — *Dean Vaughan.*

VI. **THE MESSAGE DELIVERED AND THE DIFFERENCE SETTLED**, vs. 30–35. **30.** When the commission reached Antioch a meeting of the church was called and they delivered the epistle. "This was the beginning of New Testament Scripture, the first of the Epistles." — *Lindsay.*

31. *Which* when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.

32. And Jū'das and Sīl'as, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed *them*.

33. And after they had tarried *there* a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles.

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31. They rejoiced for the consolation. The Greek noun implies strengthening as well as comforting. It " was to the distracted Christians a letter of consolation and also of exultation." — *Canon Knowling.*

32. And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren. Prophet, here, signifies preacher. Prophecy " was clearly a gift for exhortation, for comfort, and for confirmation in the hope of the gospel." — *Iverach.* This being done, Judas returned to Jerusalem, but Silas remained, to accompany Paul in his second missionary journey.

Our Disputes and How to Settle Them. There are five great classes of disputes in our day : (1) disputes between nations, leading still to terrible wars ; (2) disputes between political parties and over questions of public policy ; (3) disputes among the denominations of Christians, of which there are nearly two hundred in the United States ; (4) disputes between labor and capital, leading to fierce and injurious strikes and lockouts ; (5) disputes between individuals, neighbors, friends, relatives, business associates, over an endless variety of matters, important and trivial.

In the event we have studied the five essentials for the settlement of disputes have been clearly disclosed. They are : (1) frank and full discussion, face to face ; (2) participation in the discussion of all parties to the dispute ; (3) mutual sympathy, born of common aims and loyalty to the one Saviour ; (4) a desire for union that is willing to sacrifice non-essentials and mere personal preferences and customs ; (5) humble dependence upon the Holy Spirit, who draws hearts together in the union for which Christ prayed.

In very wonderful ways our times are seeing the application of these principles: (1) as to international affairs in the world's congresses and arbitration tribunal at the Hague, the Interparliamentary Union, the Pan-American Union, the many arbitration treaties, and the many peace organizations ; (2) as to political parties and questions in the growing intelligence of the people and their increasing willingness to put principle above party advantage and consider the good of the whole, in the downfall of the spoils system and the rise of civil-service reform ; (3) as to the denominations in the formation of the Federal Council of Churches, the growth of church federation, the actual union of denominations and of local churches, and the increased comity on the mission fields ; (4) as to labor disputes, in the lessened use of force, the increased dependence upon arbitration, and the better understanding between capital and labor ; (5) as to individual disputes, in the abolition of the duel, the condemnation of anonymous letters, the freer and fuller social intercourse, and the growing spirit of social democracy. These are all outgrowths of Christianity, putting into practice in our complex civilization the simple principles which settled the first church dispute so long ago.

LESSON X. — June 4.

THE CALL OF THE WEST. — Acts 15:36–16:15.

PRINT Acts 16:6–15. COMMIT vs. 9, 10.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* — Acts 16:9.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The lesson has seven characters. You may arrange these in the form of a rainbow, colored with the seven colors of the spectrum, — violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. Over each color print the name of one of the lesson characters, — Paul, Barnabas, Mark, Silas, Timothy, Luke, Lydia. Write for each character a series of questions bringing out the lesson facts regarding him or her, and the teachings to be drawn from them. If the question slips for each character

can be of the spectrum color assigned to that character, all the better. After you have gone over the lesson once, review it by means of these questions. Each set of questions will be fastened to the appropriate part of your drawing of the rainbow, and the pupils will be allowed, in turn, to choose a set of questions, read them aloud, and answer them.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 9, 10; Ps. 32:8; Matt. 10:40.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul's second missionary journey began probably in the spring of A.D. 50. "He spent April–May in Syria and Cilicia, summer in South Galatia, autumn in the long wandering that ended at last in Philippi." — *Ramsay.*

Places. — Starting from Antioch in Syria, through northern Syria and Cilicia and southern Galatia to Troas and across the Ægean Sea to Neapolis and Philippi.

THE ROUND TABLE.

The point at issue between Paul and Barnabas.
The character of Silas.
The training of Timothy.
How the Holy Spirit leads men.
The imperative call of missions.
The value of prayer meetings.
The character of Luke.
The character of Lydia.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: A New Continent Opened by the Holy Spirit.

I. SILAS TAKES THE PLACE OF BARNABAS, vs. 36–41.
II. TIMOTHY TAKES THE PLACE OF MARK, vs. 1–3.
III. THE BLESSED HINDERINGS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, vs. 4–8.
IV. THE MACEDONIAN CALL, vs. 9–12.
V. THE FIRST EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN, vs. 13–15.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*, chap. IV., on the second journey. Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church.* Howson's *Companions of St. Paul. Women of the Bible* (chapter on Lydia). Adeney's *Women of the New Testament*, on Lydia. Margaret E. Sangster's *Women of the Bible*, on Lydia. Whyte's *Bible Characters, Stephen to Timothy*, on Lois, Eunice, and Timothy. G. H. Morrison's *Return of the Angels* and *Footsteps of the Flock.* Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible.* Nicoll's *Sunday Evening.* William M. Taylor's *The Boy Jesus and Other Sermons.* Hasell's *Bible Partings.* John McNeill's *Sermons*, Vol. I. Phillips Brooks's *The Candle of the Lord. Elims of Life*, by J. D. Jones. Interesting chapters in Florence Morse Kingsley's *Paul, a Herald of the Cross.*

A New Continent Opened by the Holy Spirit.

I. **SILAS TAKES THE PLACE OF BARNABAS**, vs. 36–41. "In his first journey Paul may be said to have been only trying his wings; in his second journey he performed a far more distant and perilous flight. Indeed, this journey was perhaps the most momentous recorded in the annals of the human race. In its issues it far outrivalled the expedition of Alexander the Great when he carried the arms and civilization of Greece into the heart of Asia, or that of Cæsar when he landed on the shores of Britain, or even the voyage of Columbus when he discovered a new world." — *Prof. James Stalker.* Yet it started with a comparatively small objective.

36. Let us go again and visit our brethren. Paul and Barnabas were not needed at Antioch; "many others" were there to lead the infant church (Acts 15:35). "Paul was bitten with the old missionary hunger." — *Dean Furneaux.*

37. And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark, the helper who had deserted from the missionary band at Pamphylia on the first journey, and returned to Jerusalem. **Departed** (v. 38) is the Greek verb from which comes our *apostatize.* "No doubt when this young man saw Paul and Barnabas returning safe and sound from the undertaking which he had deserted, he recognized what a mistake he had made; and he now wished to retrieve his error by rejoining them." — *Stalker.* "Hippolytus calls Mark 'the man with the finger wanting,' in allusion to the Roman custom of marking a deserter by cutting off the little finger." — *Furneaux.*

38. Mark's uncle, always kind-hearted, wanted to give the young man another chance, but Paul **thought not good.** "The second missionary journey was to take them back again to those dangerous regions which they had visited before, and what guarantee had they that Mark would not turn faint-hearted and run away again?" — *Rev. J. D. Jones.*

39. **And the contention was so sharp between them.** "Contention" is literally "our word *paroxysm*. An angry dispute is indicated." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.* "Mr. Facing-Both-Ways is a certain source of trouble." — *Jones.* **That they departed asunder.** God overruled this sad event. "Two missionary parties started instead of one, and new workers were taken into the field." — *R. B. Rackham.* **And so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus,** his native land, and so "passes out of history. We part from the honorable and gracious personality of Barnabas with deep regret; but history marches with Paul." — *Sir William M. Ramsay.* He founded churches in Cyprus, and is said to have died there as a martyr. An "Epistle of Barnabas" is credited to him, and some think that he wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews. Mark, under the leadership of his noble uncle, developed into a seasoned worker whom Paul took again to his heart. See Col. 4 : 10, 11; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. 4 : 11.

40. **And Paul chose Silas, and departed.** "Both of them suffered: Paul had to part in anger from the man to whom he probably owed more than to any other human being; and Barnabas was separated from the grandest spirit of the age." — *Stalker.* "Paul never travelled alone if he could possibly avoid it; his yearning heart ever clung to human friends." — *Carl Hermon Dudley.* Silas was probably a Roman citizen, and as one of the leading members of the Jerusalem church would be most acceptable to the Jews Paul would meet. He may be the Silvanus of 1 Pet. 5 : 12. **Being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.** "This was not the case with Barnabas, leading to the inference that the church at Antioch took Paul's side in the dispute." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.*

41. **And he went through** (north) **Syria and Cilicia.** Cilicia was Paul's native country, northwest of Antioch. Paul himself had probably been chiefly instrumental in forming the churches visited here, though we have no record of it.

II. **TIMOTHY TAKES THE PLACE OF MARK**, vs. 1–3. From Cilicia "a long journey of at least 120 miles had to be made through a country which was not Roman, and in which Paul seems not to have preached, as it did not offer a favorable opening." — *Ramsay.* Going westward across Mount Taurus into Lycaonia, Paul probably traversed the famous gorge, eighty miles long, known as the Cilician Gates. "This savage defile is one of the most terrifying spots to be found in any mountainous district. Cyrus and Alexander, Romans, Saracens, and Crusaders, have traversed it in their turn. Cicero established his headquarters on the highlands at the outlet of the gorge in order to be able at one and the same time to protect his own Province of Cilicia while keeping the upper hand of Cappadocia." — *Fouard.* "To the Crusaders the gorge presented an appearance so terrible that they christened it the Gates of Judas." — *Farrar.* "Ibrahim Pasha had to blast a passage for his artillery before it could be got through the pass. Till then loaded camels could just get through." — *Geikie.* The ancients easily barricaded it in time of war.

1. **Then came he to Derbe and Lystra.** Going in a direction opposite to that of his first journey, Paul meets the cities in a reversed order. "The first question to meet him in each city would be, 'But where is Barnabas?' — one of those questions which open heart-wounds." — *Furneaux.* **And, behold.** "Indicating the surprising fact that a successor to Mark was found at once." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **A certain disciple was there.** Probably at Lystra, since Lystra, and not Derbe, is mentioned in the next verse as approving Timothy. **Named Timotheus** (R. V., "Timothy"). "He would be at this time about eighteen years of age. Some twelve years later Paul wrote to him, 'Let no man despise thy youth' (1 Tim. 4 : 12). Hence he would have been only twelve at the time of Paul's previous visit." — *Furneaux.* **The son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed;** that is, was a Christian. Paul converted her, doubtless, on his former visit to Lystra. She was Eunice, and her mother was Lois, and 2 Tim. 1 : 5; 3 : 15 beautifully describes the faith of these Hebrew women, and the Bible training they gave Timothy. **But his father was a Greek.** That is, a heathen, not a Jewish proselyte. Such marriages were not uncommon at a distance from Jerusalem, though likely to be most unfortunate. "Nine women out of ten would gradually have sunk down to their husband's unbelieving level." — *Alexander Whyte.*

Illustration. We must not forget that Timothy was the product of Eunice's training. "Napoleon was once asked what France needed most, and he replied, 'Mothers.' If the same question were put to the church of God to-day the answer might be the same, — mothers. The consecrated mother will bring her child into the great army of Christ's soldiers and servants, and there he will stay." — *Margaret E. Sangster.*

6. Now when they had gone throughout Phrȳg'ĭa and the region of Galā'tia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Ā'sia,
7. After they were come to Mȳs'ia, they assayed to go into Bĭthȳn'ĭă: but the Spirit suffered them not.

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3. **Him would Paul have to go forth with him.** "If on this journey Silas filled the place made vacant in Paul's heart by his abrupt separation from Barnabas, Timothy was destined to more than fill the place of John Mark." — *Dudley.* **And took and circumcised him because of the Jews.** "Paul's method always was to begin with the synagogue in each city, and a coadjutor whom the Jews would not admit to intimacy would be much less useful." — *Ramsay.*

III. **THE BLESSED HINDERINGS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**, vs. 4–8. Luke's plan in the Acts is to relate the most significant events only, the forward steps in evangelization, and to pass hastily by other events however interesting. At this point, therefore, he crowds into two verses what must have occupied months of profitable service.

4. **As they went through the cities**, in the process of "confirming the churches," **they delivered them the decrees**, "the deliverances of the assembly at Jerusalem, acknowledging the apostolic authority of Paul and Barnabas, denying that circumcision was necessary for salvation, and stating the concessions demanded from the Gentile converts." — *Lindsay.*

5. **So were the churches established** (R. V., "strengthened") **in the faith.** Paul's letters show us the kind of stimulating teaching they received, the most wonderful that churches have ever known.

6. **Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia.** "One district, which might be called either Phrygia or Galatia, the former being its local, the latter its political designation." — *Prof. H. T. Andrews.* It included the regions evangelized on the first missionary tour, and perhaps some country farther north. **And were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach** (R. V., "speak") **the word in Asia.** By "Asia" is meant, not the continent of Asia nor even Asia Minor, but the most western stretch of Asia Minor, along the Ægean Sea, including Lydia, Mysia, Caria, and at times parts of Phrygia. The capital of this "Asia" was Ephesus, and it contained the seven churches to which John wrote in Rev. 1–3. "How the door was shut on him we are not told: it is one of the wise reticences of Scripture. Perhaps he was warned by some prophetic voice, or visited by irresistible conviction. On the other hand, we may think of the pressure of circumstance or health, for Paul would never have hesitated to find in these the checking power of the Holy Ghost. Whatever form the prohibition took, you may be sure it was very dark to the apostle. Paul was not at all the kind of man who took a delight in being contradicted." — *Rev. G. H. Morrison.* "Wherefore they were forbidden he does not say, but that they were forbidden he does say — teaching us to obey and not ask questions." — *Chrysostom.*

Illustrations. "Livingstone assayed to go into China, but God suffered him not, and sent him to Africa to be its missionary general, statesman, explorer. Carey planned to go to the Great Polynesia in the South Seas, but God guided him to India to lay foundations for giving a vernacular Bible to one-sixth of the people of the world. Judson did go to India, but was driven to Burma, where he built up an apostolic church for all the age. Barnabas Shaw was thrust out from Boerland, and trusted to God's guidance of his kine and cart, not knowing whither he went, until the twenty-eighth day brought him to the chief of Namaqualand, his 'man of Macedonia,' who literally said, 'Come over and help us.'" — *Arthur T. Pierson.*

7. **After they were come to** (R. V., "over against") **Mysia.** Mysia was the northernmost of the three divisions of "Asia" along the Ægean Sea. They had reached its eastern border. **They assayed to go into Bithynia**, the rich province lying east of Mysia, along the southern shore of the Black Sea. It contained many large cities, most attractive to Paul. "Pliny, who was Proconsul in A.D. 110, found numerous Christians there. The churches in Bithynia may have been founded later by Peter, whose first Epistle is addressed in part to them." — *Furneaux.*

OUR BITHYNIAS. Had Paul's desire been granted, and he suffered to go to Bithynia, he might "never have landed on the shore of Europe; never have lifted up his voice in Athens; never have preached the riches of his Saviour beside the Roman palace of the Cæsars. He was thwarted, and it led him to his crown." — *Morrison.* So with

8. And they passing by Mÿs'ĭă came down to Trō'ăs.

9. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There stood a man of Măcedō'nĭă, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Măcedō'nĭă, and help us.

10. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Măcĕdō'nĭă, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

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our childhood dreams, our maturer hopes, our baffled attempts at self-expression, the denied cravings of our hearts, our worthy ambitions that are not realized — all these are Bithynias from which God turns us away because he has a far more glorious Macedonia in view for us.

But the Spirit (R. V., "the Spirit of Jesus") **suffered them not**. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus as well as the Spirit of God. He fulfils Christ's promise, "Lo, I am with you alway." "*But the Kind Spirit suffered us not.* When we can say that, the sting is drawn from the pain." — *Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.*

8. **And they passing by Mysia**. "Not *avoiding*, since they could not reach Troas without traversing it; but *omitting* it as a preaching-place." — *Vincent.* **Came down to Troas**, from the highlands to the coast. This was Alexandria Troas, named in honor of Alexander the Great, the chief port of the northwest Ægean, and a Roman colony. "The city was then a mile across, with square towers along the walls for soldiers to defend them, and a chariot racecourse, a theatre for public games, sculptured temples, and hot baths, to which water was brought, by a long stone water-way, from the famous springs and fountains of Mount Ida." — *Robert Bird.* "At only four miles' distance lay the Plain of Troy, where Europe and Asia encountered each other in the struggle celebrated in Homer's immortal song. Not far off Xerxes, sitting on a marble throne, reviewed the three millions of Asiatics with which he meant to bring Europe to his feet. On the other side of that narrow strait lay Greece and Rome, the centres from which issued the learning, the commerce, and the armies which governed the world." — *Stalker.* It was a scene well fitted to rouse the ambition of Paul, that eager soldier of the cross.

IV. **THE MACEDONIAN CALL**, vs. 9–12. "This is in many respects the most remarkable paragraph in Acts. The divine action is introduced three times in four verses, marking and justifying the new and great step which is made at this point." — *Ramsay.*

9. **A vision appeared to Paul in the night.** "It is only when we obey that visions come." — *Morrison.* "Before every well-done work the vision comes. We dream before we accomplish. We start with the glorified image of what we are to do shining before our eyes, and it is its splendor that encourages and entices us through all the drudgery of the labor that we meet." — *Phillips Brooks.* **There stood a man of Macedonia.** Farrar thinks it was a soldier. Ramsay thinks it was a vision of Luke. "The first Europeans they see are the Macedonians, with their outlandish dress, on the beach and in the streets of the town." — *Prof. H. Weinel.* **And prayed him** (R. V., "beseeching him"), **saying, Come over into Macedonia.** "God sent him. Not the Macedonians themselves. They did not want the gospel. God sent him, because he saw that they needed the gospel." — *Phillips Brooks.* **And help us.** "Greece had every secular possession the heart can name — beauty, philosophy, art, culture, gayety. Judea had at this moment no secular possession at all; she had only Christ. Yet rich Greece called for the help of poor Judea! The secular world cannot live without the help of Christ." — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.*

10. **Immediately** (R. V., "straightway"). "Delayed duty is present discomfort." — *Alexander Maclaren.* "I think I see Paul leaping from his couch, in the burning certainty that God had spoken, and sending Luke post-haste down to the harbor to see when the next ship was likely to set sail. . . . We must interpret our bright gleams in instant duty." — *Morrison.* **We.** Here begins the first of the famous "we" passages of the Acts, which indicate that Luke himself was with Paul during the events related. Luke was a physician, and perhaps Paul fell ill in Troas and thus met Luke and converted him.

Luke, "the Beloved Physician." It is the tradition that he was a native of Antioch. Possibly he attended the university of Tarsus and met Paul there. He was a Gentile, and perhaps a freedman, "since among the Romans the study of medicine

11. Therefore loosing from Trō'ăs, we came with a straight course to Sămōthrā'cia, and the next *day* to Nēăp'ōlĭs;

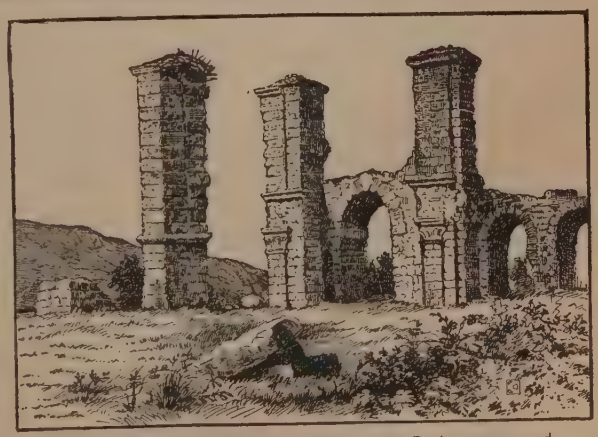
12. And from thence to Phĭlĭp'pī, which is the chief city of that part of Măcĕdō'nĭă, *and* a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

was generally left to slaves, many of whom were very skilful." — *William M. Taylor.* "His medical skill would be of use in gaining an opening for preaching the gospel, as modern missionaries often find." — *Furneaux.* He was a faithful friend to Paul, "gentle and manly, sympathetic and self-denying." — *Farrar.* "What all the churches owe to him for his care of Paul is only second to what they owe to him as the writer of the Third Gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles." — *Prof. James Iverach.*

Endeavoured (R. V., "sought") **to go into Macedonia.** "The most significant invasion Europe ever saw." — *Dudley.* Here begins "one of the greatest and most successful enterprises of the world — the extending of Christianity over Europe." — *Dean Howson.* Where Xerxes with his million men failed, Paul and his three companions succeeded. "Just suppose that Paul and Silas had been ordered the other way. Then very likely Europe would have been the India and the Asia and the Africa that now are, and away in those lands the ministers would be doing their best to get their people to contribute to foreign missions to evangelize the barbarians of Europe." — *Rev. John McNeill.*

11. **Therefore loosing** (R. V., "setting sail") **from Troas.** "Do not despise the smallness of beginnings. The fate of a continent may be in one little boat." — *Morrison.* **We came with a straight course to Samothracia.** The island of Samothrace, "a huge boulder planted in the sea," was halfway between Troas and Neapolis. Its mountain, "with the exception of Mount Athos, is the highest point in this part of the Ægean." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* "This lofty mountain may have been the travellers' compass even from the time when they left Troas." — *Prof. G. H. Gilbert.* "The Mysteries of Samothrace were the obscurest of all ancient rites. Multitudes flocked thither. Eleusis alone could boast of greater throngs." — *Fouard.* **To Neapolis,** "Naples," "Newtown," the modern Cavallo, the seaport of Philippi, which lay about eight miles farther north. "About 140 miles from Troas, and near the Thracian boundary." — *Gilbert.*

12. **And from thence to Philippi,** so called from its founder Philip, the father of Alexander the Great. The city had long been famous for its neighboring gold mines. It was situated on the great Egnatian Way connecting Europe and Asia. "As the travellers approached the city they crossed the river Gangites, on opposite banks of which the armies under Brutus and Cassius on one side, and Octavianus and Antony on the other, were formed in order of battle before that final struggle which decided the fate of the Roman Republic. The missionaries walked through the field of battle as they drew near the city." — *Prof. J. W. McGarvey.* **Which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia** (R. V., "the first of the district"). Macedonia was divided into four divisions. "Amphipolis had been the chief city of the division to which both belonged, but Philippi was fast outstripping it in prosperity, and the two places stood to each other much in the relation of Minneapolis and St. Paul at the present



Ruins in the market place of Philippi, where Paul was scourged.

13. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*.

14. And a certain woman named Lȳd'ĭă, a seller of purple, of the city of Thȳătī'rā, which worshipped God, heard *us:* whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.

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day." — *Rev. S. Baring-Gould.* **And a colony** (R. V., "a *Roman* colony"). Made such by Augustus Cæsar (Octavius) "in honor of this victory, which opened the way for all his future greatness." — *Thatcher.* He made Philippi a military settlement of his veteran soldiers, to whom he assigned farms. "Philippi was Rome reproduced, a little Rome, with officers, laws, privileges, and spirit similar to those of the capital itself." — *Prof. J. M. Stifler.* Paul, at a step, had come very near his great goal, Rome.

V. **THE FIRST EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN**, vs. 13–15. **13. And on the Sabbath.** "The day from which all this missionary success spread forth was the *Sabbath*." — *Dean Howson.* **We went out of the city** (R. V., "forth without the gate"). "Under the triumphal arch which commemorated the great victory of Philippi ninety-four years before." — *Farrar.* **By a river side.** "There is but one stream, the Gangas or Gangites, in the Philippian plain that enters it from a deep gorge. It passes to the west of Philippi, and loses itself in a marsh." — *Baring-Gould.* The Jews often placed their sanctuaries near rivers for convenience in their ceremonial washings. "The open air has been the scene of the greatest victories of the cross." — *Rev. F. B. Meyer.*

From the British Museum

Coin of Philippi.

Obverse: Head of Augustus, with the legend, *Cæsar Aug. P. M. Tr. P. Imp.* (Cæsar Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribune Power, Imperator). Reverse: Figure of a god crowning Augustus. Legend: *Col*(onia) *Aug*(usta) *Jul*(ia) *Philip*(pi).

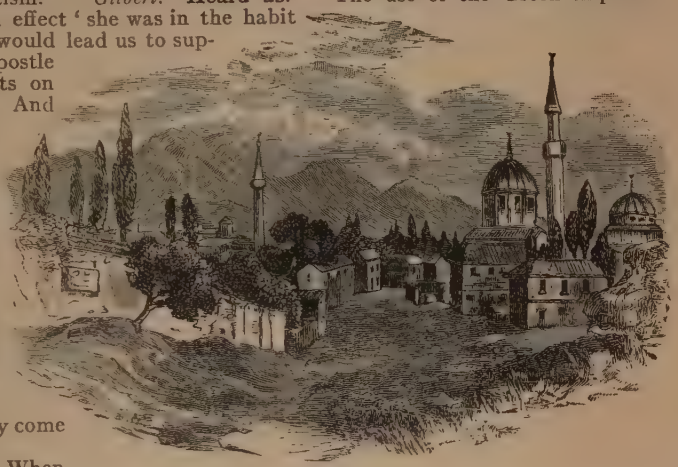
Where prayer was wont to be made (R. V., "where we supposed there was a place of prayer"). "The Rabbinical rule was that ten men were required to constitute a synagogue; so that there were probably fewer here." — *Furneaux.* "Consequently there was no synagogue, but only a *proseucha*, or *praying-place*, a slight structure, often open to the sky." — *Vincent.* "The whole of this great success began with *prayer*." — *Howson.* **And we sat down.** "The mightiest thing done in Europe that morning was when the apostle sat down by the riverside and spoke to the women." — *Maclaren.* "That little assembly was as simple and unobtrusive as possible, more like a small prayer meeting or a Bible class than anything else. In this unpretending scene the Conversion of Europe began." — *Howson.* **And spake unto the women which resorted thither** (R. V., "which were come together"). "A few women crouched within the humble walls of the place, their sombre mantles drawn closely about their faces." — *Florence Morse Kingsley.* "The position of independence and prominence occupied by women both in Philippi and Berœa is quite in accordance with what we know from inscriptions of the honorable place assigned to women in Macedonia." — *Knowling.* Christianity has made women honored everywhere, and they in turn have honored Christianity.

14. And a certain woman named Lydia. "The 'man of Macedonia' turns out to be a woman!" — *Andrew Bonar.* She may have been named from her native country, "the Lydian," as was often done with freed women, "Afra, Græca, Syra"; but Lydia was a popular name for women, and was often used by Horace in his lyrics. **A seller of purple.** Either the beautiful and permanent dye obtained from a vein around the neck of a Mediterranean fish, or the expensive cloth dyed with this purple. She must have been well-to-do, to deal in articles so costly. "The business woman

is familiar enough in the twentieth century, but in the first she existed, too, and although she was then less conspicuous, she was not unimportant." — *Margaret E. Sangster.* **Of the city of Thyatira**, in northern Lydia, where later grew up one of the Seven Churches of Revelation 1–3. Lydia was famous for its purple dyes, and Thyatira, as an inscription tells us, possessed a guild of dyers.

"As when some Carian or Mæonian dame
Tinges with purple the white ivory,
To form a trapping for the cheeks of steeds.
— *Homer, Iliad*, IV., 141.

Mæonia is the ancient name for Lydia. **Which worshipped God.** "She was a proselyte of Judaism." — *Gilbert.* **Heard us.** "The use of the Greek imperfect tense, meaning in effect 'she was in the habit of hearing' him, would lead us to suppose that the apostle repeated his visits on several Sabbaths. And all this time the pious woman was drinking in his words with an open mind." — *Prof. W. F. Adeney.* **Whose heart the Lord opened.** "Lydia's prayers lead to Lydia's open heart. Thus the gates of Europe lift up that the King of glory may come in." — *Adeney.*



City of Thyatira.

Illustration. When water from without presses against the folding-doors of a canal-lock, they are held shut all the more firmly; but if water is admitted within the lock, soon the doors can be opened. Thus "many an empty heart resists the offer of mercy from God; but when secretly some grace finds its way in, and the empty space gradually fills, then the whole soul opens out to Christ." — *Arnot.*

That she attended unto (R. V., "to give heed unto") **the things which were spoken of** (R. V., "by") **Paul.** "See an indication of St. Luke's modesty: '*we* spake' in v. 13, but now only Paul is mentioned." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* "You might have been converted like Lydia long, long ago, if ever once you had listened with attention and intention to the poorest preacher who ever stood here." — *McNeill.*

15. **And when she was baptized.** Perhaps in that very river on whose shores Augustus conquered Cassius and Brutus. "Now this same stream has its share in the establishing of a greater realm in Europe than the empire of Augustus." — *Adeney.* **And her household.** Either her children, or the workers in her business, or perhaps her domestic servants. Thus Cornelius (Acts 10:24) and the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:33) brought their households with them into the Christian church. **She besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord.** "She considers opportunities of kindness to be God's *rewards*, not his burdens. When shall duty be so transfigured to all disciples of Christ?" — *Rev. H. Elvet Lewis.* **Come into my house, and abide there.** "The open heart reveals her receptivity; the open house her generosity." — *Adeney.* The Philippian church often helped Paul, and doubtless Lydia was foremost in these gifts. **And she constrained us.** "The verb denotes heart-hunger for being helpful, for being allowed to serve." — *Lewis.* "Paul had been very particular not to be a charge to the believers in the cities where he went. He was perhaps unreasonably touchy on this point, but here he could not refuse." — *Baring-Gould.* "Lydia was rewarded a hundred-fold for her kindness by the spiritual benefits derived from her illustrious guest." — *Mrs. S. T. Martyn.*

LESSON XI. — June 11.

SOWING AND REAPING. — TEMPERANCE LESSON. — Gal. 6.

PRINT vs. 1-10. COMMIT vs. 1, 2.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* — GAL. 6:7.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Interest in the lesson may be aroused by having the pupils collect during the week clippings from the newspapers showing the evils that spring from the saloon. A single week's news will furnish an appalling array of evil deeds committed by men under the influence of liquor. Pin these clippings to a board.

Every verse of the lesson is full of hints for temperance as well as for our daily life. Divide the verses among the members of the class, and ask each to come prepared to give the temperance application of his verse, and also its application to every-day living.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time and Place. — The Epistle to the Galatians was written by Paul, probably at Corinth, about A.D. 57, though some scholars place it as early as A.D. 50. It was written to the churches founded by Paul in Galatia — Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, etc.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Sowing and Reaping, in Individual Lives and in National Life.

I. BURDEN-BEARING, vs. 1–5.
The terrible burden of drunkenness.
II. SEED-SOWING, vs. 6–8.
Satan's seed-sowing in the saloon.
III. PERSEVERANCE, vs. 9, 10.
Perseverance in the temperance reform. Forward steps.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 1, 2; Gal. 5: 19–24; Rev. 21: 27.

THE ROUND TABLE.

Burdens we can help others bear.
Burdens we must bear ourselves.
Burdens the saloon places upon men and nations.
Good seed for sowing in our hearts.
Bad seed sown in our hearts.
Present-day progress in temperance.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Galatians, especially those by Ramsay, Bacon, Robinson, Findlay, and Perowne. Maclaren's *Expositions*. Many sermons, notably by Huntington (*A Good Shepherd*), McConnell (*A Year's Sermons*), Burrell (*The Old-Time Religion*), Taylor (*Contrary Winds*), Watkinson (*The Education of the Heart* and *The Blind Spot*), Potter (*Sermons of the City*), Trench (*Sermons New and Old*), Macmillan (*The Spring of the Day*), Thompson (*Burden-Bearing*), Trumbull (*Shoes and Rations for a Long March*), Farrar (*Every-day Christian Life*), Alford, Robertson, Horace Mann, Dewey, Service, Temple, Martyn, Marsten, Foster, Benson, Chalmers, Moody, Blake, Gibson (*A Strong City*), Mozley, Moinet, Nicoll (*Sunday Evening*), MacArthur (*Calvary Pulpit*), De Witt, Little (*Labour and Sorrow*), "Sam" Jones, Vaughan, Kingsley (*Village Sermons*), Williamson, Cox, Glazebrook (*Prospice*), Matheson, Dale, etc. A very important work, *The Anti-Alcohol Movement in Europe*, by Ernest Gordon.

1. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Sowing and Reaping, in Individual Lives and in National Life.

I. **BURDEN-BEARING**, vs. 1–5. **Brethren.** "A whole argument lies hidden under this one word." — *Bengel.* **If a man be overtaken in a fault** (R. V., "in any trespass"). Some commentators consider that the meaning is, "surprised in committing the sin," caught red-handed, in the very act; but most commentators think it means, "surprised *into* committing the sin," "hurried into error," as Professor Vincent translates it. As, for example, Peter was suddenly tempted, by the serving-

2. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

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girl's unexpected charge that he was Christ's disciple, to deny his Lord. Thus many a man is tempted into drinking by the wretched custom of treating. **Ye which are spiritual**, led by the Holy Spirit and therefore not fallen into sin. **Restore such an one.** " Restore " is a Greek verb used elsewhere of setting bones and mending nets. Any sinner, even a drunkard, may be made as good as new.

Illustrations. "We do not give up wrecked ships, but pull them off the rocks or haul them up from the depths. We do not give up a marble statue, though it is broken into a hundred pieces, but ingeniously fit them together till the statue is beautiful and complete as before. So we should not give up shattered lives."—*Condensed from Watkinson.*

" When Conkling precipitated himself from the Senate, very much against General Grant's judgment, yet Grant attempted in every way to shield him, saying nobly, ' When is the time to show a man's self friendly, except when his friend has made a mistake ? ' " —*Condensed from Beecher.* So drunkards, who have the fewest friends, need friends the most.

In the spirit of meekness. " As opposed to a Pharisaic severity." — *Gray.* " We must rebuke ourselves before we rebuke others." — *Caspars.* **Considering** (R. V. " looking to ") **thyself.** " No man is in a position to do for others until he can get himself out of the way." — " *Sam* " *Jones.* **Lest thou also be tempted.** " Who may look coldly on his tempted brother ? To-morrow he himself may be that tempted and fallen one." — *Rev. R. S. MacArthur, D.D.*

Illustration. " The graceful vase that stands in the drawing-room under a glass shade and never goes to the well, has no great right to despise the rough pitcher that often goes and is broken at last." — *A. K. H. Boyd.*

2. Bear ye one another's burdens. We are to bear the burden of others' sorrows, sins, weakness. " Help one another to be nobler, purer, more unselfish, braver." — *Bishop Temple.* Christ is the great Burden-bearer, who " hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." And " Christ's carrying our burdens binds us to carry our brother's." — *Alexander Maclaren.* But why weigh ourselves down with these burdens of others? " It is Christ's method of saving you from selfish sin." — *Rev. S. D. McConnell, D.D.* " The same isolation which shuts us up against the sorrows of others shuts us up also against their joys." — *Archbishop Trench.*

Illustrations. " I once studied lawyers in a courthouse bearing the burden of one who was a hunchback by never referring to his deformity, by never handing him his cane, by avoiding everything of that kind. They were delicate ; they were wise; they treated him as though he was six feet high, and stalwart and robust." — *Rev. John Rhey Thompson, D.D.*

Moses' life work began the day he went out to visit the Hebrew slaves and " look on their burdens." He took them upon his own shoulders and so became one of the greatest men of history.

" The ancient symbol of Government was a lame man carried on the shoulders of a blind man, one being legs to the other and the other eyes to him." — *Burrell.*

" What is it that makes us call the ant and the bee the wisest of animals, except that they do, in some degree, behave like men in helping one another ? " — *Kingsley.*

And so fulfil (" carry out " — *Twentieth Century New Testament*) **the law of Christ.** This law is Christ's " ' new commandment, that we love one another,' and it is precisely in such mutual consideration and regard that this law is fulfilled." — *Speaker's Commentary.*

3. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing. " Claims to have some such superiority as to raise him above the duty of carrying the burdens of others." — *Boise.* **He deceiveth himself,** "but he deceiveth no one else." — *George M. Adams.*

Illustration. " Boswell relates that Dr. Johnson told him that when his father's workshop, which was a detached building, had partly fallen down for want of being repaired, he was no less diligent to lock the door every night, though he saw that anybody might walk in at the back. Even so do many persons, guarding themselves against one approach of sin only, while they are exposed to danger from some other point, vainly suppose themselves safe from their spiritual foes." — *Brewin.*

4. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.
5. For every man shall bear his own burden.

4. **But let every man prove** (test) **his own work**, " as opposed to his feelings and fancies." — *Speaker's Commentary.*

Illustration. " The reason why there is so little self-condemnation is because there is so little self-examination. For want of this many persons are like travellers, skilled in other countries, but ignorant of their own." — *Archbishop Secker.*

And then shall he have rejoicing in (R. V., " his glorying in regard of ") **himself alone, and not in another** (R. V., " and not of his neighbour "). " Then his cause for satisfaction will be in himself and not in a comparison of himself with his neighbour." — *Twentieth Century New Testament.*

5. **For every man shall bear his own burden.** The Greek word here translated " burden " is entirely different from that so translated in v. 2. Here it means the soldier's knapsack, the traveller's pack, the ship's cargo. In this burden is ammunition, food, possessions. It is Christ's burden, which he said is light. " We shall never know the true peace till we can see that our burden is itself a blessing. Every burden is a cross ; but, according to that fine saying of the early Church, the cross we bear bears us." — *Samuel Cox.* " We are also taught that we ought not, by any well-meant but ill-judged generosity, to lift off from our brother's shoulders the duties and responsibilities that rightfully belong to himself." — *Bishop Potter.*

Illustrations. " A farmer took into his cart a weary traveller who was carrying a pack. As he drove on, he saw that the traveller's burden was still on his back. ' Why don't you lay it down and rest? ' asked he. ' It is enough,' replied the foolish man, ' that you should carry me without carrying my burden too.' And thus we journey heavenward, making our yoke hard and our burden heavy, because we forget that for Christ to carry us is no easier than to carry our burden with us." — *Rev. D. J. Burrell, D.D.*

" Napoleon said once to his soldiers that every private carried a marshal's baton in his knapsack. If that which seems the trial, even the humiliation, of your life is borne nobly in the service of your Captain, Christ, you may find therein, one day, some high commission." — *Canon Glazebrook.*

As St. Christopher was carrying the Child Christ over the dangerous river, the small form grew larger and heavier till it became a man. " But had not the Child grown so heavy, even the giant might have been swept away by the wild rushing waters. The burden only made him plant staff and foot more firmly. The burden was his safety." — *Samuel Cox.*

Each stone of a building, as Williamson says, bears its own burden, yet at the same time helps to carry the other stones with their burdens.

Ogburn illustrates with the many tons of coal in a vessel's hold — a heavy burden, but it enables the vessel to cross the ocean, and it grows lighter with each mile of the journey.

THE TERRIBLE BURDEN OF DRUNKENNESS. In Ernest Gordon's noteworthy book, *The Anti-Alcohol Movement in Europe*, a fearful chapter, " Europe Alcohol-Sick," pictures the burdens which drunkenness is placing upon the European nations. " Twenty-five thousand perished in field and hospital during the great days of the Franco-Prussian war ; fifty thousand is the estimated number of German deaths in each year from alcoholism." " Baer estimates that 54 per cent of German divorces are from drink." " On two-thirds of the children from drunken families in Berlin institutions head scars have been found, indicating abuse." " Professor Eulenburg affirms that in 24 years 1152 school children in Berlin killed themselves, and he attributes this not to over-study but to home troubles. This means, in most cases, alcohol." " Professor Bollinger's extensive autopsies (5700 bodies) showed that every sixteenth male in Munich dies of Munich beer heart." " From 1877 to 1901, twenty-five years, the number taken for drunkenness to the hospitals and insane asylums of Germany increased fivefold, and for delirium tremens threefold, although the population had increased but one-third." " Of all Germany's expenditures for food and drink, 27.74 per cent is for alcohol."

Similar conditions are found all over Europe. " In 1881 France had 367,000 saloons and 47,000 insane ; in 1907, 477,000 saloons and 70,000 insane." " There is now a drink-shop to every 82 persons in France." " Alcohol is destroying the French

6. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

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peasantry by inducing tuberculosis." "The physicians of the Paris hospitals are unanimous in asserting that the greater part of the sicknesses they care for present the symptoms, more or less complete, of alcohol intoxication." "Belgium had, in 1907, 210,310 drink-shops of all kinds, or one to every 34 in the population." "The recent Danish government commission for considering new alcohol legislation affirmed that every fourth male death in that land was to be attributed to alcohol, as either the direct or contributing cause." "The gross income of the Russian government monopoly of drink-selling [now happily abandoned for the policy of national prohibition] nearly equals the combined revenues of Spain and Portugal. To the peasants it is a far worse scourge than the hundred thousand wolves of European Russia." "An investigation carried on in the schools of Milan, Italy, among 36,462 children brings to light the fact that 24.8 per cent of the boys and 11 per cent of the girls confess to having been intoxicated at various times."

More than a million immigrants come to America every year from these countries where the consumption of alcohol is about three times as large *per capita* as it is in the United States. Hence the increase in the amount of liquor drunk yearly, in spite of the increase in prohibition territory. The immigrants settle chiefly in the great cities of the license States. "One-half of all the saloons in the United States are located in fourteen cities. Thirty-six States of this Union have fewer saloons *in the aggregate* than the city of New York. The Gibraltar of the American liquor traffic is the American city." — *Anti-Saloon League Year-Book.* Only the most heroic efforts can keep our country from becoming alcohol-sick like Europe.

II. **SEED-SOWING**, vs. 6–8. **6. Let him that is taught in the word**, that is, the Christian gospel. The Greek word translated "taught" is literally transferred in our "catechism" and "catechumen." It signifies oral instruction, of which there was already the beginnings in the churches, the teachers having no regular salaries, but relying on the gifts of their pupils. **Communicate** ("hold fellowship with" — *Vincent*) **unto him that teacheth.** "There was no system of instruction in the pagan religions. Hence the duty of supporting teachers or preachers had to be continually impressed upon the attention of all Paul's converts from paganism." — *Sir William Ramsay.* **In all good things.** "Money, food, clothing, and the like." — *Cambridge Bible.* After all these centuries the churches are still remiss in this matter, and the salaries of ministers are shamefully low. The Pinchot-Gill investigation of 1913 showed that, low as they are, they are diminishing in size compared with the increasing cost of living.

7. Be not deceived. Satan will try to make you believe that you can sin and escape the punishment. Nevertheless, "it is an absolute impossibility for a man to continuously and successfully practice a fraud upon his immortality." — "*Sam*" *Jones.*

Illustration. D. L. Moody once gave out this verse as his text when a man stood right up in the audience and said, "I don't believe it." Mr. Moody said, "My friend, that doesn't change the fact." At the close of the meeting an officer arrested him at the door and he was sent to the penitentiary for twelve months for stealing. He learned that he had to reap what he had sowed.

God is not mocked. Hayman translates: "God puts up with no mockery." "The word for 'mocked' implies the most unseemly and insulting gesture. And God is mocked when we pretend to be his while we cut our being in twain and give half to Satan." — *Farrar.*

Illustrations. "When we enter a great jewellery establishment it seems as if we could move about handling gold or gem with impunity; but, in fact, the stranger does not touch one precious thing without being watched most severely. So in life we handle the costliest treasures — time, health, culture, friendship, wealth, influence, and we seem at liberty to do as we please with these things; but the eye of God is upon all his gifts, and every one shall give account of himself unto God." —*Watkinson.*

"There is a kind of darnel, or rye-grass, called 'mouse-rye,' because it so counterfeits the real grain that the very mice are deceived by it. But would a kernel of that,

8. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

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in the richest soil, ever produce the other? No! Mice or men may be deceived, but 'God is not mocked.'" — *Henry Clay Trumbull.*

For whatsoever a man soweth. This is Paul's parable of the sower. "There is a spiritual agriculture, as real as that of which the spade and the plough are the emblems." — *Rev. William Reed Huntington, D.D.* "Every harvest demands its own preparation, and that preparation will not produce another sort of harvest." — *F. W. Robertson.* **That shall he also reap.** "We might call this *the* law of human life." — *Rev. J. Monro Gibson, D.D.* "Sow an indulgence, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny."

"Plant blessings, and blessings will bloom;
Plant hate, and hate will grow;
You can sow to-day — to-morrow shall bring
The blossom that proves what sort of a thing
Is the seed, the seed that you sow."

Illustrations. Pharaoh's seed-sowing of oppression, and the reaping of the death of the first-born. David's sowing of murder, and reaping of sorrow and death.

The eggs of the gypsy moth, blown from a window-sill where a college professor carelessly left them, and the results of a New England almost stripped of trees and millions of dollars spent to get rid of the pests.

8. For he that soweth to his flesh, "the flesh being conceived as the soil into which the seed is cast." — *Vincent.* "By 'the flesh' Paul means humanity minus all godly affections and desires and purposes." — *Huntington.* "He who sows the field of his earthly nature." — *Twentieth Century New Testament.* **Shall of the flesh reap corruption.** "The soil, though it looks promising, is lacking in nutritive ingredients. It is powerless to grow the grain. What is sown in it rots and dies." — *Huntington.* "The sinner has to pay." — *Nicoll.* **But he that soweth to the Spirit,** "obeying the promptings of the Spirit and conforming to his will." — *Nicoll.* "It does not mean that we are to cease gratifying our senses, to give up making money, to abandon society and live the life of a monk. Not at all. But it does mean that all our lower desires are to be regulated, subordinated, and controlled by the higher life of the Spirit." — *Gibson.* **Shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting** (R. V., "eternal life"). "He who admits a holy suggestion into his mind will find that ever more in the pauses of life, even in its bustle and business, things allied to it will steal into the current of his consciousness." — *Taylor.* Thus our "Quiet Hours" in the morning bear fruit throughout the day, and little sentences spoken for Jesus save souls for eternity.

"Sower divine!
Sow the good seed in me;
Seed for eternity.
'Tis a rough, barren soil,
Yet, by thy care and toil,
Make it a fruitful field,
An hundredfold to yield.
Sower divine,
Plough up this heart of mine!" — *Horatius Bonar.*

SATAN'S SEED-SOWING IN THE SALOON. All the foregoing applies precisely to the use of strong drink. The saloon is Satan's favorite field, and in it he sows all kinds of tares. There are seeds of many diseases — disordered digestion, weakened nerves, faulty heart action, consumption, blurred vision, insanity, these are only a few of the terrible results of drunkenness. There follow the loss of business judgment, the destruction of will power, lack of initiative, failure in one's life work, poverty, the suffering of one's family for the very necessities of life. The deadliest seeds are those of sin — licentiousness, quarrelsomeness, the dulling of conscience, with the loss of human friends and with forgetfulness of God. These are the seeds to which every drinker opens his soul and his life.

III. **PERSEVERANCE,** vs. 9, 10. **9. And let us not be weary in well doing.** "The Greek word for 'weary' is a compound of *kakon,* which means badness; while the Greek word for 'well doing' is a compound of *kalon,* which means beauty or goodness. And the meaning of the advice of the apostle therefore is, let not your goodness

10. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

become badness, your beauty, deformity." — *Rev. Hugh Macmillan, D.D.* "The infirmities of the flesh often make us weary, the ingratitude of those we strive to help, our apparent want of success." — *MacArthur.*

Illustrations. "Green roses, a case of floral backsliding, where the rose, instead of going forward to produce its crimson blossom, goes back into a mere tuft of green leaves, which has not the beauty or use of the blossom, nor the beauty or use of the foliage." — *Macmillan.*

Balaam's consent to prophesy for the enemies of Israel. The church of Ephesus, which left its first love.

For in due season we shall reap. When the reaping season comes. "Why look for your harvest here? It is *March*, not *August* yet." — *Expositor's Bible.* "Let us not forget that God must be the judge of the 'due time.' We are often in a hurry; God never is. Perhaps the greatest miracle in Christ's life is that he should wait thirty years before performing a miracle." — *MacArthur.* "As the French lady said to the great ecclesiastic, 'My Lord Cardinal! God does not pay at the end of every week, but at the last he pays!'" — *Taylor.*

"The secret is deeper than we can read, —
But we gather the grain if we sow the seed." — *Lucy Larcom.*

If we faint not. The harvest will not fall into our hands; the Christian's life, like the farmer's, is one of toil.

"Let us set the plough with a joy akin
To the joy of putting the sickle in."

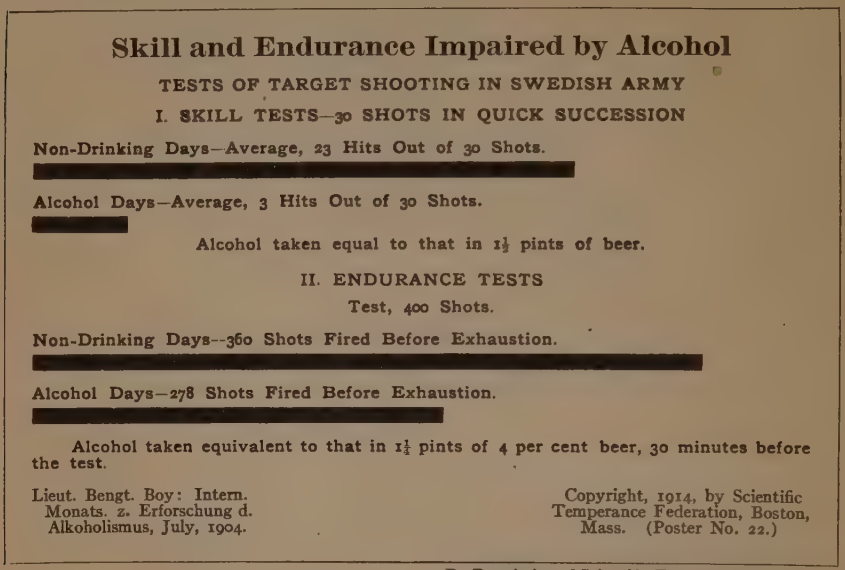
Illustration. "An orphan obtained a humble position in a bank through the kindness of a friend. His friend said to him, 'All I will ask of you is that you should be the first to come and the last to go, and that you should never refuse extra work.' The lad went on faithfully, but for years no one seemed to observe him. He had the work, but not the thanks. Then a day came when he was promoted, and he is climbing the ladder now." — *Nicoll.*

10. As we have therefore opportunity. "Better, 'since we have a period appointed.' The reference seems to be to the 'due season' of v. 9." — *Prof. B. W. Bacon.* "But there is no place and no hour in which we cannot let the light of our love shine." — *Prof. John De Witt.* **Let us do good unto** (R. V., "work that which is good toward") **all men.** "A Brahmin once said to a missionary, 'Look here! Your Book is a good Book. If you were as good as your Book you would make India Christian in ten years.'" — *Maclaren.* "It is an important point that Paul requires the beneficence of the Galatians to be extended to all men, and not confined to 'them that are of the household of faith.' . . . The establishment of institutions for the general benefit of orphans and exposed children was certainly common in the early church." — *Ramsay.* **Especially unto them who are of the household of faith** (R. V., "the faith"). "The faith" means the gospel of Christ, which unites all believers in one great family. "Let your charity begin at home, but do not let it end there." — *Henry Martyn.*

PERSEVERANCE IN THE TEMPERANCE REFORM. FORWARD STEPS. In no religious work is patient perseverance more needed than in the temperance reform, the forces of evil are so powerful and determined. The war against the saloon in the United States is waged by many strong agencies. The fight for temperance legislation is conducted by the Prohibition Party and the Anti-Saloon League, with organizations in the various States. Local No-License Leagues often aid them. Educational work is done by the National Temperance Society aided by the Scientific Temperance Federation and the National Inter-Church Temperance Federation. Scientific study of the effects of alcohol on the body is conducted by the American Society for the Study of Alcohol and Narcotics. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union does temperance work along all lines, including the important study of temperance in the public schools. The Loyal Temperance Legion is its work for the young. The Lincoln Legion urges personal pledge-signing. Personal abstinence is advocated by the Order of Good Templars and similar organizations. Most of the denominations now have influential temperance committees. The Intercollegiate Prohibition Association is doing a

splendid work for temperance study in colleges. The Christian Endeavor and other young people's societies have active temperance departments.

In Europe the anti-alcohol warfare is waged by powerful temperance congresses, by ingenious and convincing travelling anti-alcohol exhibitions, by temperance posters, by a strong student movement, by work among the soldiers, by vigorous efforts made by Socialist temperance organizations, and by the circulation of a wonderful temperance literature. We owe to Germany the scientific proof of the harm done by even small quantities of alcohol.


Skill and Endurance Impaired by Alcohol
TESTS OF TARGET SHOOTING IN SWEDISH ARMY
I. SKILL TESTS—30 SHOTS IN QUICK SUCCESSION
Non-Drinking Days—Average, 23 Hits Out of 30 Shots.
Alcohol Days—Average, 3 Hits Out of 30 Shots.
Alcohol taken equal to that in 1½ pints of beer.
II. ENDURANCE TESTS
Test, 400 Shots.
Non-Drinking Days—360 Shots Fired Before Exhaustion.
Alcohol Days—278 Shots Fired Before Exhaustion.
Alcohol taken equivalent to that in 1½ pints of 4 per cent beer, 30 minutes before the test.
Lieut. Bengt. Boy: Intern. Monats. z. Erforschung d. Alkoholismus, July, 1904.
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Forward steps in America are many. The temperance forces are coming together, in conventions and in practical action. All are uniting in demanding a prohibition amendment to the national constitution. The area of prohibition has widened till it includes half the nation in both area and population. Temperance instruction is required in practically all the public schools. Congress has passed a law forbidding the shipment of liquor into prohibition States. The growth of woman suffrage favors prohibition. An increasing use of temperance posters (such as the one shown above), bill-boards, exhibits, and text-books is educating the masses. All we need is to press forward, not to grow weary in well doing, and the victory will be ours.

LESSON XII. — June 18.

THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER. — Acts 16:16–40.

PRINT vs. 19–34. COMMIT vs. 33, 34.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.* — ACTS 16:31.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

An effective manner of conducting this recitation will be the following. Make of pasteboard a flight of steps leading up to a low platform on which you will place a doll's chair, the whole representing the magistrates' tribunal in the marketplace before which Paul and Silas were brought. In front of this set up a stick representing the whipping-post to which they were tied for the beating. Beginning at the top,

fasten to the whipping-post a series of slips of paper, each bearing a question on the healing of the slave girl and the beating. The pupils, detaching them in order and answering them, will have an outline of the first half of the lesson. Make from pasteboard a model of the prison, a box open on top for the outer prison, with cells around the sides; fastened to this another box representing the inner prison, all closed except one door on hinges. Lay on the "floor" of the inner prison a pile of cards, each bearing a question on the last half of the lesson. The pupils will insert their hands, one at a time, withdraw a question, and answer it.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Autumn, A.D. 50, immediately after the last lesson.

Place. — Philippi, near the praying-place, in the marketplace, and in the prison.

THE ROUND TABLE.

Demon-possession and soothsaying.
The struggle between greed and the gospel.
Roman and Jewish scourgings.
The value of Roman citizenship.
Songs in the night.
What is it to be a Christian?
When to stand up for one's rights.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 33, 34; John 3:14–16; Ps. 107:13, 14.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How God Brought Great Good out of a Great Trial.

I. THE FRENZIED GIRL HEALED, vs. 16–18.
II. UNJUST BEATING AND IMPRISONMENT, vs. 19–24.
III. THE GREAT REWARD OF SOULS SAVED, vs. 25–34.
IV. THE HUMBLED MAGISTRATES, vs. 35–40.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Demon Possession and Allied Themes, by Nevius. Bishop Lee's *Eventful Nights in Bible History*. A vivid chapter in Mrs. Kingsley's *Paul, a Herald of the Cross*. Poems by Pierpont and Newton. A valuable treatment in Hastings's *Great Texts of the Bible*. Chapters in Parkhurst's *The Blind Man's Creed*, Chapman's *Revival Sermons*, Mark Guy Pearse's *The Gospel for the Day*, Young's *Unfamiliar Texts*, McKenzie's *Cambridge Sermons*, Stimson's *The New Things of God*, Talmage's *Sermons on the Holy Land*, Shepherd's *Men in the Making*, Wright's *The World to Come*.

How God Brought Great Good out of a Great Trial.

I. THE FRENZIED GIRL HEALED, vs. 16–18. Our lesson "is an epitome of the whole history of the gospel." — *Dean C. J. Vaughan.*

16. As we went to prayer (R. V., "the place of prayer"). The praying-place by the river where Lydia was converted. **A certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us.** Literally, she had "a spirit, a Python." Python, from the Greek verb, *to rot*, was the great serpent which Apollo killed on Mt. Parnassus and left to rot. Hence Apollo was called "the Pythian," and soothsayers who were supposed to be inspired by Apollo, with wild cries and convulsive movements, were said to have a Python. "In our day we do not look on such a phenomenon as the union of two personalities, but as a divided consciousness in one person." — *Dean W. M. Furneaux.* "It is probable that this maid was suffering from hysteria or some similar form of nervous and mental disease, and that her masters could in some way force her to fall into a fit of hysteria. In this condition she spoke with a strange tone, which the ancients called ventriloquism, and was regarded as the peculiar speech of soothsayers and fortune-tellers." — *Prof. Oliver J. Thatcher.* "It is manifest that Paul regarded it as a case of real possession by an evil spirit." — *Rev. Thomas Morrison, LL.D.* Dr. Nevius in his *Demon Possession and Allied Themes* gives from his forty years' observation in China some interesting examples of modern demoniacs. He relates the case of a female slave possessed by a spirit, who was highly prized by her master as a means of gain. Others spoke in two, three, four, and even six separate voices, speaking in character, or displayed knowledge which the ordinary person did not possess. **Which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying.** She was a slave, and so valuable that a company had been formed to own her. Her shrewd master would interpret her incoherent ravings as the utterances of fate. Florence Morse Kingsley pictures the girl as driven through the streets, while her masters behind her bellowed: "Come one, come all, and learn the future from the lips of the divine prophetess, Mara! More wonderful than the oracle at Delphi, the heaven-inspired Mara! Hast thou lost

19. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Sī'las, and drew *them* into the marketplace, unto the rulers,

anything? Mara can reveal its hiding-place! Art thou in doubt about to-morrow's ventures? Mara can counsel thee! Art thou ill? Mara can cure thee!" She would tell the gold miners of Philippi where to find the gold, select the day for a wedding, tell travellers when to set out for a voyage. "Her misery and degradation were a symbol of the disfiguration, as Lydia's sweet and benevolent Christian character was of the transfiguration, of womanhood." — *Prof. James Stalker.*

17. On one occasion, and perhaps on many occasions, this demented slave followed Paul and his three companions, **and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God.** She thought they were slaves of some god, as she was slave of Apollo. "These words, which seem to us to carry some intimation of Christian character, did not convey any such impression to the people in the streets, and there is no reason to think that they were understood in that way by the girl herself. 'The Most High God' was a familiar name in the syncretistic paganism of the time, mixed of various Oriental and European elements." — *Sir William M. Ramsay.* The Gadarene demoniac used the term with regard to Jesus (Luke 8 : 28). **Which shew unto us** (R. V., "proclaim unto you") **the way of salvation.** "'Salvation' was what all were seeking after and asking for in the pagan world, and was often prayed for in pagan votive offering." — *Ramsay.* Yet, based on heathenism though they were, these outcries of the poor girl set forth clearly the message of the Christian missionaries. "And why not let the Philippians learn from one whose voice was counted oracular the real character and errand of the apostles?" — *Bishop Lee.* It was a strong temptation.

18. **And this she did many days.** Paul did not stop her, possibly because he expected each outcry to be the end, or "from prudential reasons he perhaps hesitated to provoke a controversy with heathenism by a direct attack on one of its most cherished and potent superstitions." — *Abbott.* **But Paul, being grieved** (R. V., "sore troubled"). "Worn out." — *Vincent.* **Said to the spirit,** the demon that was harassing her, **I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ** (Paul would have no credit for the miracle) **to come out of her.** Thus Christ (Mark 1 : 25) rebuked the demon that gave similar testimony regarding himself, and bade him depart. Paul would not confirm superstition or compromise his message by thus associating it with error. In the same way our modern churches should refuse tribute from the evil. **And he** (R. V., "it") **came out the same hour.** "The immediate proof of this fact may have been that she ceased to cry out after the evangelists." — *Prof. G. H. Gilbert.* "Her hallucination of being inspired by some demon passed off when she heard it adjured, in the name of a far Higher, to leave her." — *Geikie.* "In this miracle Christ fulfils the promise of Mark 16 : 17; Luke 9 : 1. Compare Luke 10 : 17." — *Abbott.* Lydia and this slave girl typify "the two most important social revolutions worked by Christianity, the elevation of women and the abolition of slavery." — *Furneaux.* We are not told what became of the girl; very likely Lydia and the other Christian women of Philippi took care of her.

Illustration. "In the days of knightly chivalry it was supposed to be enough for the true soldier of the Cross to make the sacred sign upon his person, and instantly the foul spirits that had gathered in the murky gloom to do him harm fell back and let him through. It was not all legend and myth. The truth is ours to-day — that the best resource for the hardly-beset soldier of Jesus is to appeal not to the Cross, but to Him who, on that Cross, bruised the serpent's head, not for Himself only, but for us." — *Rev. F. B. Meyer.*

II. **UNJUST BEATING AND IMPRISONMENT,** vs. 19–24. **19. When her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone.** "The verb is exactly the same in Greek as in the last clause of the previous verse. When the evil spirit *came out,* there *came out* also the chance of more gain." — *Cambridge Bible.*

Illustrations. For the same reason the image-dealers of Ephesus persecuted Paul. Thus the Gadarenes cared more for the loss of their swine (Matt. 8 : 28–34) than that two men had been saved from demons.

"So the rum-sellers anathematize all movements in the direction of temperance. So the traders in heathen lands denounce the missionaries. So the padrones curse the men who take the poor Italian boys from their cruel bondage. Touch a man's pocket, and very frequently you touch the only sensitive spot he has about him." — *William M. Taylor.*

20. And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

21. And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Rō'mans.

22. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clóthes, and commanded to beat *them*.

They caught (R. V., "laid hold on") **Paul and Silas.** Luke and Timothy were not seized because they were less prominent, or perhaps because they were not present, or because they were not Jews. "They evidently conceived the idea that, if the superior influence of the strangers were removed, the slave might recover her power." — *Ramsay.* **And drew** (R. V., "dragged") **them into the marketplace.** The agora or forum, where business was done, social life centered, and the magistrates administered justice. **Unto the** (R. V., "before the") **rulers.** The usual name of the rulers of a colony was *duumviri* (*two men*), "answering to the consuls of Rome; but they took pride in calling themselves *praetors*, as being a more honorable title." — *Prof. Marvin R. Vincent.*

20. **Saying, These men, being Jews.** The Jews, always hated for their proud and uncompromising spirit and their commercial shrewdness, as well as their higher morality, had recently been expelled from Rome by the Emperor Claudius, and the capital would be imitated by the colonies. **Do exceedingly trouble our city.** The magistrates would not sympathize with their real grievance, so they make a false complaint under the guise of regard for civic welfare.

Illustration. "So it always is. Whether it be George Fox, or John Wesley, or the Salvation Army, the disorderly elements of every community attack the preachers of the gospel in the name of order, and break the peace in their eagerness to have it kept. There was no 'trouble' in Philippi but the uproar which they themselves were making." — *Alexander Maclaren.* So Christ was accused before Pilate of sedition.

21. **And teach** (R. V., "set forth") **customs, which are not lawful for us to receive.** "As the Jewish religion was permitted in the Roman empire, it must have already become apparent that these two Jewish men were introducing an altogether different cult and different ceremonies than the Jewish." — *Prof. Bernhard Weiss.* "The crime of proselytism to an unauthorized religion was a serious one; in the case of a patrician it entailed deportation, in that of one of the lower classes it was capital." — *S. Baring-Gould.* **Being Romans.** This in proud contrast to the phrase of v. 20, "being Jews."

22. **The magistrates rent off their clothes.** "The Greek verb implies that they were stripped naked, not simply that their backs were bared for the rods. See 1 Thess. 2 : 2." — *Gilbert.* "Here we have an example of that same truckling to the clamor of a mob which has made infamous the name of Pontius Pilate." — *Prof. J. W. McGarvey.* **And commanded to beat them** (R. V. adds, "with rods"). The beating was done by the lictors, officers who marched before Roman officials to clear the way. They carried as token of their office a bundle of rods tied together, and in the case of the highest officials an axe, signifying capital punishment, was inserted in the bundle with the rods. No Roman could legally be beaten without a formal trial, of which here there was no pretence. The outcry of the mob may have drowned the protests of Paul and Silas that they were Roman citizens, or the proceedings may have been in Latin which they could not understand, or the magistrates may have disbelieved the claim and continued in spite of it, though to make such a claim falsely was a capital offence. Cicero in his oration against Verres tells how that Roman governor in Sicily scourged a Roman citizen, though in the midst of his agony he kept exclaiming, "*Civis Romanus sum*," "I am a Roman citizen."

Fasces with the axe inserted.

From a bas-relief of the Mattei palace at Rome.

23. **And when they had laid many stripes upon them.** The Jewish number would have been thirty-nine, but "there was no such merciful limitation among the Romans." — *Geikie.* It was a horrible punishment, blood flowing freely, the very bones

23. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely:

24. Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25. And at midnight Paul and Sī'las prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

being sometimes exposed, and death occasionally resulting. Paul's frail body suffered this torture eight times (2 Cor. 11 : 24, 25), five times from the Jews and three times from the Romans, but we have the detailed record of only this occasion. After this cruel beating **they cast them into prison**, giving the jailer a vague charge which he would interpret as calling for added torture.

24. Who . . . thrust (R. V., "cast") **them into the inner prison.** The outer prison supplied some light and air to the criminals confined in it, but the inner prison, opening out of this, had no light whatever, was unventilated, fearfully hot, and foul with bad air, filth, and vermin — a horrible place. "A pit for Joseph. A lion's cave for Daniel. A blazing furnace for Shadrach. Clubs for John Wesley. An anathema for Philip Melanchthon. A dungeon for Paul and Silas." — *T. DeWitt Talmage.* **And made their feet fast in the stocks,** "to prevent them from rising and forcing open the crazy doors." — *Robert Bird.* These stocks were contrived, "not as with us for detention, but for torture, straining very painfully the limbs and throwing all the weight of the body on the bruised shoulders." — *Mark Guy Pearse.* By this wooden or iron framework "the legs could be distended to such an extent as almost to dislocate the hips." — *Baring-Gould.* But "the stocks had no power to grasp prayer, and hinder it from ascending heavenward." — *Arnot.*

A Prisoner in the Stocks.

III. **THE GREAT REWARD OF SOULS SAVED**, vs. 25–34. **25. And at** (R. V., "about") **midnight.** There was no sleep for the apostles. "Their bodies beaten black and blue, their wounds open and sore, they were kept by the stocks in a constrained attitude which would have prevented them from obtaining rest even if they had been in perfect health and strength." — *Iverach.* **Paul and Silas prayed** (R. V., "were praying") **and sang praises** (R. V., "hymns") **unto God.** "Literally, 'praying, they sang hymns.' The praying and the praise are not described as distinct acts. Their singing of hymns was their prayer, probably Psalms." — *Vincent.* There are many appropriate Psalms : 79 : 11 ; 102 : 19, 20 ; 107 : 10, 13–16 ; 129 : 3, 4 ; 146 : 7, etc.

"In that hour when night is calmest
Sang they from the Hebrew Psalmist."

"Other prisoners were shut up with them, the usual tenants of a Roman jail, runaway or delinquent slaves, debtors, thieves, robbers, roughs of all kinds ; but even such company did not abate their fervor." — *Geikie.* "*We* count it a great feat of Christian magnanimity not to murmur, to be what we call resigned : here were those who were 'joyful in tribulation.'" — *Rev. James Hastings, D.D.*

Illustrations. "These birds could sing in a darkened cage. . . . The true anæsthetic is trust in God." — *Maclaren.*

"This was an anticipation in practice of what Paul afterwards enjoined on this very Philippian church (Phil. 4 : 4–6), 'Rejoice in the Lord alway,' etc." — *Howson.*

"God, my maker, who giveth songs in the night." — Job. 35 : 10.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage." — *Lovelace.*

"It is when you look from the bottom of a well that you descry the stars in daylight ; on the surface, with the glare all round, although they are there, you cannot

26. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm; for we are all here.

29. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Sī'las,

30. And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

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discern them. It is thus that faith's eye cannot pierce the heavens so well from the bright surface of prosperity as from the low, low place of some great sorrow." — *Arnot.*

And the prisoners heard them (R. V., "were listening to them"). "The verb indicates attentive harkening." —*Cambridge Bible.* "Curses, no doubt, were familiar enough in that dismal house of punishment and pain, but not blessings; oaths, but not prayers; wailing and gnashing of teeth, of the slave and the malefactor, not hymns of a holy gladness, of the saint and the martyr. No wonder, then, that they all listened." — *Hastings.*

26. **And suddenly there was a great earthquake.** "The place and the time were noted for violent earthquakes." — *Professor Lindsay.* **And immediately all the doors were opened.** "Each door was merely closed by a bar, and the earthquake, as it passed along the ground, forced the door-posts apart from each other, so that the bar slipped from its hold, and the door swung open." — *Ramsay.* **And every one's bands were loosed.** "Staples fastened in the wall and wooden stocks fastened to the ground might obviously be loosened by a force which cracks the ground and the walls." — *Gilbert.*

27. **The keeper . . . seeing the prison doors open.** "He apparently slept in a place that commanded a view of the doors; and he lay dressed, with his sword beside him, in case of riot or attempted escape." — *Maclaren.* **Would have killed himself.** "He was about to plunge into eternity: a sufficient proof that he was unprepared to go into it." — *Henry Martyn, the famous missionary.* "According to the Roman law, the jailer was subject to the same death as the escaped prisoners would have suffered." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* Compare Acts 12:19. The cowardice of suicide was highly esteemed in those days. Brutus and Cassius had killed themselves after their defeat outside Philippi. Cato, the philosopher, had slain himself. Seneca, Epicurus, Lucretius, Pliny, defend the practice in their writings. **Supposing that the prisoners had been fled** (R. V., "had escaped"). "Supposing" darkens many lives. "We die a hundred deaths in fearing one. Our greatest sorrows are often created by our imagination." — *Rev. Dinsdale T. Young.*

28. **But Paul cried with a loud voice.** There may have been light outside, or he may have divined the jailer's intention by some cry of his. **Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.** "We are impressed here with the temperate manner of the greatest of men; with the calmness of his demeanor; with the masterful spirit which is in him." — *Alexander McKenzie, D.D.*

Illustration. During the terrible cyclone at St. Louis, May 27, 1896, when $25,000,000 worth of property was destroyed and 400 lives were lost, "a twenty-foot section of the western wall of the City Jail was blown down, exposing the interior. It was during exercise hours and 200 prisoners exercising in the building became panic-stricken. They were too frightened to try to escape."

29. **Then he called for a light** (R. V., "lights"). "The prisoners' chains were loosed, and worse chains were loosed from himself; he called for a light, but the true heat was lighted in his own heart." — *Chrysostom.* Trembling with fear and awe, he fell down before Paul and Silas as if they were gods.

30. **And brought them out** "of the inner prison into a more comfortable place." — *Gilbert.* **And said, Sirs** (no longer prisoners, but lords, as the word is literally), **what must I do to be saved?** Saved from what? His prisoners were safe, and he would be complimented by the higher authorities for keeping them safe in such circumstances. But the terrors of the earthquake and his own imminent peril had brought

31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

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the next world very near and had aroused in him a sense of his sinfulness. Compare Luke 5 : 8.

WHAT IS SALVATION? We are not to be saved (1) from the wrath of God, for God is love; nor (2) from the justice of God, for in that justice lies our hope; nor (3) from the penalty of sin, for every sin must meet its exact and just penalty. We are to be saved (1) from the depression and shame of sin; (2) from the power of sin; (3) into a godly character; and (4) into an unselfish life. — *Condensed from Hastings.* "We are to be saved from sin by being delivered from the power of evil; and sin is the wilful assertion of our self-will against the holy will of God." — *Rev. Ambrose Shepherd, D.D.* "Salvation is loving everything that God loves and hating everything that God hates." — *Sam Jones.*

Conversion of the Philippian Jailer.

31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. "The brevity and decisive plainness of this answer are the glory of the gospel." — *Maclaren.* "Lord" is the divine name. "The men whom the jailer had just called 'Lords' point him to the only 'Lord.'" — *Cambridge Bible.* "Jesus" is the human name; this Lord became man. "Christ" is the sacrificial name; this God-man died for the sins of the whole world. Believing on him means simply obeying him, and as we obey him we come to understand him. **And thy house.** "Not that they should be saved without faith, but that their faith should be awakened through his." — *Abbott.*

HOW BELIEF ON JESUS SAVES. "Our trust does not save us, it makes a way for Christ to save us." — *Hastings.* In the first place, it shows us our sin, and our need of a Saviour. "Stanley tells us that he found men in Africa who never knew that they were black until they looked upon a white man. So many a man can never know what sin is until he sees it in the presence of Jesus Christ." — *Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D.* In the second place, our trust in Christ enables us to make trial of him, and he does all the rest.

Illustrations. A little girl asked if she might go down to her father, who was doing something in the cellar. He called back that she might, but when she went to descend she found that the ladder had been taken away. "I can't get down," she called; "there is no ladder." "Jump down," her father answered, "and I will catch you." "But I can't see you, father; I can't see anything," said the child. "I can see you," was the reply; "jump, and I shall be sure to catch you. My arms are wide open now." The child hesitated no longer, jumped into the darkness, and was safely caught. — *Condensed from J. R. Gregory.*

33. He . . . washed their stripes, at once illustrating his Christianity by Christ-like deeds. "He washed their stripes, was washed from sin; he fed them and was fed." — *Chrysostom.* **And was baptized, he and all his.** In the rain-water reservoir, or swimming-bath, such as houses commonly had. "The purple-dealer and proselytess of Thyatira; the native slave-girl with the divining spirit; the Roman jailer — all alike acknowledge the supremacy of the new faith, and they are representatives

34. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

of three different races: the one an Asiatic, the other a Greek, the third a Roman." — *Canon R. J. Knowling.*

34. When he had brought them (R. V. adds " up ") **into his house**, which " would seem to have been above the prison " (Vincent), **he set meat** (literally, " a table ") **before them.** " In one and the same hour he was (1) a heathen, and a brutal one ; (2 an anxious inquirer; (3) a rejoicing believer ; and (4) a Christian worker." — *Spurgeon.* " Paul makes no question about sitting at meat with the uncircumcised." — *Weiss.* **And rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.** " He rejoiced with such heartiness that Paul and Silas for the time forgot their sufferings in their discovery of the reason why God had permitted such things to be inflicted on them." — *William M. Taylor.*

IV. THE HUMBLED MAGISTRATES, vs. 35–40. **35. And when it was day.** The magistrates must have passed an uneasy night! As early as possible they **sent the serjeants**, the lictors who had scourged Paul and Silas, **saying, Let those men go.** " Let those fellows go." — *Conybeare and Howson.* The earthquake may have aroused the superstitious fears of the prætors, or they may have reflected how hasty their action had been, or Lydia, Luke, and Timothy may have appealed to them on behalf of the prisoners.

37. But Paul said unto them. " Almost every word of this reply contains a distinct allegation. It would be difficult to find or frame a sentence superior to it in energetic brevity." — *Hackett.* " Paul might personally forgive the wrong done to himself, but a public wrong had been done to justice and to religion. For the sake of others these provincial magistrates must be taught not to use mob law ; and for the sake of the church at Philippi it was necessary to establish the claim of the gospel to the respect of the heathen." — *Furneaux.* **They have beaten us openly** (R. V., " publicly "). " No doubt they had been lashed to the *palus* or public whipping-post in the sight of the people." — *Cambridge Bible.* **Uncondemned.** That is, without a trial and a verdict. " In flagrant violation of the Lex Valeria, B.C. 509, and the Lex Porcia, B.C. 248." — *Expositor's Greek Testament.* **Being Romans.** Paul sarcastically echoes the charge of v. 20, " being Jews." **Now do they thrust us out privily?** " Adding insult to injury, they hope to cover up a crime and a blunder by underhand means." — *New Century Bible.*

38. The magistrates . . . feared, when they heard that they were Romans. " Every Roman citizen had the right of appeal to the Emperor, and injustice done to a Roman was strictly inquired into and visited with severe punishment." — *Iverach.* These magistrates had made themselves liable to the loss of office, possibly to the loss of goods or even of life itself.

39. The magistrates humbly did all that Paul required, coming in person and begging their pardon, respectfully escorting them from the prison, and asking only that, for fear of arousing other disturbances, they would leave the city. Paul, however, with dignity took his time about that.

40. They . . . entered into the house of Lydia. It would be some days before they had recovered their strength sufficiently to travel, and they spent this time in encouraging the members of the infant church. Then they departed, taking Timothy with them (Acts 17 : 14), but seemingly leaving Luke behind to care for the Philippian converts ; at least, the narrative here passes into the third person. Thus, amid sore trials but glorious evidences of God's power and love, was established the Philippian church, which was especially dear to Paul and especially kind to him, and to which he wrote one of the most affectionate and beautiful of his Epistles.

LESSON XIII. — June 25.

REVIEW. — THE PHILIPPIAN CHRISTIANS.

READING LESSON: Phil. 1 : 1–11 ; 4 : 1–9.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* — PHIL. 4 : 8.

The following forms of review are presented for the teacher's selection. Choice should be made of the review best adapted to the class, and perhaps the methods of two or more reviews may be combined.

I. A PIN REVIEW.

Draw on a large sheet of manilla paper an outline map of the country covered by the quarter's lessons, from Jerusalem to Damascus and Antioch, and west to Philippi. Insert the coast lines, but do not mark the cities. Prepare circles of colored cardboard, one for each event of the quarter's lessons : the conversion of Saul (1), the healing of Æneas (2), the raising of Dorcas (3), Peter and Cornelius (4), Peter delivered from prison (5), etc. Sometimes there will be several distinct events in a lesson. The first exercise will be for the pupils to name in order the events of the quarter's lessons, and as each is named the appropriate number is to be fastened at the proper place on the map by a pin. The next exercise is to call upon the pupils to remove these numbers in haphazard order, as called for: " John, remove the number that stands for Paul's stoning," etc. This having been accomplished, the numbers will be restored by the teacher, the pupils naming each place and event as he does so. Next take a red cord and, at the dictation of the pupils, pass it from pin to pin till it represents the movements of Peter during the lessons. Similarly, take a blue cord and wind it back and forth as the pupils dictate, to represent the various journeys of Paul. You will need to add a pin for Tarsus and another for the scene of Paul's three years in Arabia. Finally, prepare a number of pins bearing paper pennants, on each of which is printed the name of a subordinate character of the lessons, such as Rhoda, Bar-Jesus, Luke, Ananias. The pupils will pin these at the places where each lived. For Mark, Barnabas, Silas, and Timothy cords of different colors may be used, as for Peter and Paul.

II. GREAT-SENTENCES REVIEW.

Write upon a large number of pieces of cardboard the great sentences of the quarter's lessons, one sentence on a piece. You will use such sentences (or parts of sentences) as " We also are men of like passions with you," " The hand of the Lord was with them," " Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Lay these cards on the table (or on a book) writing side downward, and have the pupils take them up one by one, read it aloud, and tell who said it and on what occasion. If the pupil is not able to tell, any other pupil may do so, thus obtaining the card. The pupil that holds the largest number of cards at the close of the exercise is the victor.

III. A TRAVEL-CLUB REVIEW.

Joppa from the shore.

This review must be prepared at home. Each member of the class is to make ready to give a " travelogue," or travel-talk, describing one of the journeys of the quarter: " A Journey to Damascus," " A Journey to Joppa," " A Journey to Cæsarea," " A Journey to Cyprus," " A Journey to Iconium," etc. The account may be written, or given without paper. It may be given in the first person, as if the pupil were describing a journey he had himself taken.

IV. GREAT-PROBLEMS REVIEW.

This form of review is adapted to adult classes. It consists of a discussion of the chief problems of the quarter's lessons, particularly those bearing most directly upon

modern life. One of these will be assigned to each of a number of members of the class, who will read a brief essay or give a little talk on his subject. The following topics may be used : " How the Holy Spirit Converts Men To-day " (Lesson I.) ; " How Closely Should We Affiliate with Men of Other Faiths ? " (Lesson III.); " What Answers to Prayer Like the Release of Peter from Prison May We Expect To-day ? " (Lesson V.); " How Can the Church Be Aroused to the Great Work of Missions ? " (Lesson VI.); " False Prophets of Modern Times, and How to Deal with Them " (Lesson VI.) ; " True Teachers of To-day Whom Men Are Rejecting " (Lesson VII.) ; " The Perils of Popularity " (Lesson VIII.) ; " What Are the Essentials of the Christian Faith ? " (Lesson IX.) ; " The Most Urgent Macedonian Calls of Our Time " (Lesson X.) ; " The Most Promising Method of Temperance Reform " (Lesson XI.) ; " The Conditions of Salvation " (Lesson XII.).

V. A CHARACTER REVIEW.

Each member of the class will write at home and read to the class on Sunday a brief character sketch of one of the characters of the quarter's lessons : Peter, Dorcas, Cornelius, Rhoda, John, Mark, Ananias, Barnabas, Bar-Jesus, Silas, Timothy, Luke, Lydia, the Philippian jailer. As to Paul, you will suggest various topics, such as Paul the Persecutor, Paul the Missionary, Paul the Orator, Paul the Traveller, Paul the Organizer, Paul the Writer, Paul the Friend, Paul the Christian Hero. Limit the little essays to one minute each, and assign two or more to each pupil if your class is not large enough to assign one pupil to each theme. The pupils may be allowed to select their own topics.

VI. A SCREEN REVIEW.

Using the series of Lesson Pictures published by the W. A. Wilde Company, arrange them on a screen facing the class, the picture sides toward the screen, only the backs exposed. Arrange them in haphazard order. The pupils will go to the screen one at a time, select a picture and remove it, look at the picture, and then tell the class about the lesson which the picture illustrates, the class filling in forgotten details after each speaker is through. Thus continue until all the pictures have been removed. The pupils may be allowed to keep the pictures. This review is suited to the younger classes.

VII. AN EXPANDING-CHURCH REVIEW.

The plan of the Acts is in Christ's command and prophecy (Acts 1 : 8), " Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." This quarter shows the expansion of the church according to this programme, and the review may be conducted along these lines. Taking a blackboard or a large sheet of paper, draw five concentric circles, with considerable space between them. The inner circle will be marked " Jerusalem," the next " Palestine," the next " Syria," the next " Asia Minor," and the next " Greece." These circles will be filled up, by the class, with brief statements of the events occurring in the geographical zones thus designated. Draw from the centre four radii, thus dividing the entire diagram into quarters. One quarter will be for dates, one for events, one for persons, and one for places. The inner circle will hold two events, the deliverance of Peter from prison and the Jerusalem council. Add in the other quarters of the circle the dates of these, the persons involved, and the places : the Castle of Antonia, the house of Mary, possibly the " upper room " for the council. In the same way the second circle will contain the healing of Æneas, the raising of Dorcas, and the meeting of Peter and Cornelius. The third circle will contain the conversion of Saul, the choice of the first missionaries, and the report of the first missionary journey. The fourth circle will contain the visit to Cyprus, and the first and second visits to the various cities of Asia Minor. The fifth circle will contain the Macedonian call and the events at Philippi. The teacher will fill in the chart as the class dictates, and the class will copy the chart, as it is filled up, on their own smaller charts.

JULY 2 — SEPTEMBER 28, 1916.

LESSON I. — July 2.

PAUL AT THESSALONICA AND BEREA. — Acts 17:1–15.

COMMIT vs. 11, 12. CONSULT 1 Thes. 2:1–12.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour.* — Acts 5:31.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Trace on the largest map available the course of Paul's journey, and note the cities he passed through.

Place a modern map by the side of the ancient one, to make the places more real; and recall the events which have lately been transacted there.

Since this lesson has special references to the Scriptures in both cities, it will be a fine opportunity to emphasize the reading and the study of the Bible, by old and young, through every means in the teacher's power.

Teach the Patriotism of Bible Study, especially because the Fourth of July is so near.

LEARN BY HEART.

Deut. 6:6–8; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; John 8:31.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul reached Thessalonica about A.D. 50 or 51. About 20 years after the beginning of the Christian church.

Extent of Time. — According to Professor Ramsay Paul was in Thessalonica five or six months, December, A.D. 50, to May, 51, and in Berea from May to August, A.D. 51.

This was on Paul's *Second Missionary* Journey, during which he first entered Europe.

Place. — Thessalonica, the modern Saloniki, was the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia. It was on the great Roman military road, called the Egnation way. The Roman armies and commerce went by land from Rome S.E. to Brundisium on the Adriatic, sailed across that sea to Dyrrachium in Macedonia, and then entered upon the Egnation way to the East, 700 miles long, passing through Berea, thence 45 miles to Thessalonica, thence 100 miles N.E. to Philippi, and on into Thrace. It has been a most thriving city till the late war between the Balkan States and Turkey.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Expositor's Greek Testament. Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church. American Commentary, Acts.* (Baptist Pub. Society.) Maclaren's *Expositions of Acts; The Expositor's Bible. Cambridge Bible. Westminster Commentary* on Acts by Rackham. *Twentieth Century Bible.* Bartlett (Oxford University.) *Bible for Home and School,* Gilbert (Macmillan). *The Westminster New Testament,* Acts, by Professor Andrews.

The Life of Paul by various authors.

Peloubet's *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts,* 346–354, has several illustrations, and his *Front Line of the Sunday School Movement* has three chapters on Bible study — "Ignorance of the Bible," "Growing interest in Bible study," and "Methods of Bible study."

THE ACROPOLIS AND GENERAL VIEW OF ATHENS

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Thessalonica and Berea in Paul's time.
Their modern condition.
Several ways in which Paul used the Scriptures.
What success did he have?
How far was it true that Paul was turning the world upside down?
In what respect were the Bereans more noble than the Thessalonians?
Why did Paul leave Berea, and was this a wise course?
The women of Thessalonica and Berea.
Different ways of searching the Scriptures.
The purpose of reading the Scriptures.
Reading in course. Learning by heart.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Bible study in two cities.

I. PAUL'S EXPERIENCE IN THESSALONICA. THE STORY OF HOW THE BIBLE WAS TURNING THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN, VS. 1–10.
II. PAUL'S EXPERIENCE AT BEREA. STORY OF THE EFFECT OF BIBLE STUDY ON THE CHARACTER, VS. 10–15.
III. METHODS AND EFFECTS OF BIBLE STUDY PERMEATE THE LESSON.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Farrar's *Messages of the Books.*

On the charge that Jesus was a rival of Cæsar, see Tacitus, *Annals*, 3 : 38. For the law of treason, see Merivale's *History of the Romans under the Empire.*

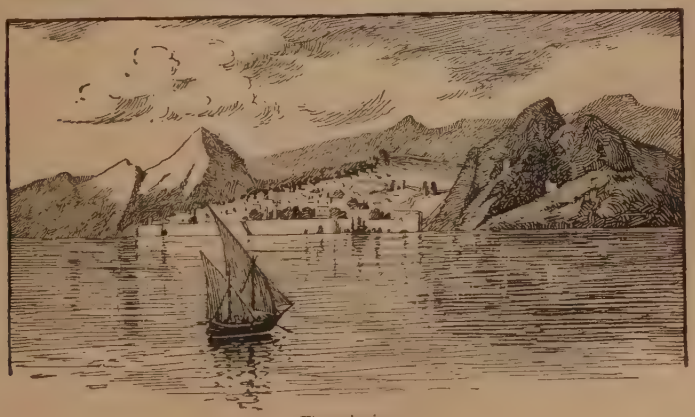
On turning the world upside down, read Begbie's story of *The Day that Changed the World.*

Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies* is a fine example of the way the scriptures may be opened to us.

THE LESSON IN ART.

St. Paul preaching to the Thessalonians, by Doré.

I. PAUL'S EXPERIENCES AT THESSALONICA, vs. 1–9. THE STORY OF HOW THE BIBLE WAS TURNING THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN. Paul was on his Second Missionary Tour or Campaign, with Silas and Timothy (v. 14) as his companions and aids. It is wise for missionaries to have some companion with them, as Jesus sent his disciples out two by two. These three men had been driven away from Philippi because they interfered with a profitable but wicked business. Moving toward the Southwest on the Egnation way, the great military road which led to Rome, — paved throughout with blocks of marble, and with every mile marked by a milestone showing its distance from that city, — they came first to **Amphipolis**, 33 miles from Philippi; and 30 miles further on they entered **Apollonia**. For two reasons they made very brief stays at these two cities ; they were too near Philippi to be safe, and there was no synagogue in either place, and therefore but few Jews ; and both could be better evangelized from Philippi and Thessalonica, the more important cities. Thirty-seven miles more brought the missionaries to Thessalonica, about 100 miles from Philippi.



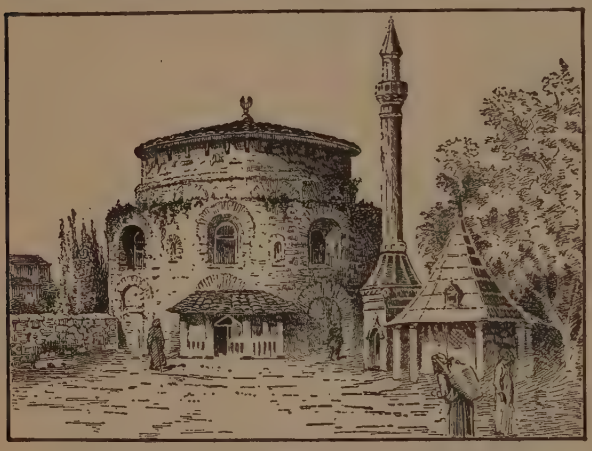
Thessalonica.
Modern Saloniki.

Thessalonica was the largest city in Macedonia, and famed as a commercial centre. Under its old name, Therma (Hot Springs), we read of it in Herodotus and Thucydides. It was rebuilt by Cassander, and renamed after his wife, Thessalonica, sister

Now when they had passed through Ăm-phĭp′o-lis and Ăp-ŏl-lō′nĭ-à, they came to Thĕs-sa-lō-nī′cà, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

2. And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

to Alexander the Great. This princess received her name to commemorate a victory won by her father, Philip of Macedon (over Thessaly), on the day he received the news of her birth. It is now called Saloniki of Macedonia, part of Kingdom of Greece, and till the Balkan war was an important commercial emporium of 100,000 inhabitants. "Rising with its white domes and minarets, its vines and cypresses, up the sides of a steep hill, between two ravines, it presents a splendid appearance, as the traveller sails into the deep blue waters of its noble bay, and gazes from it upon the snowy mountain crests of Olympus and Pelion." But when you reach the city all its beauty disappears.



Traditional church in Thessalonica where Paul preached.

Where was a synagogue of the Jews, which would be the centre of his missionary work, the means of getting a foothold for both Jews and Gentiles.

And Paul, as his manner, better "custom" (Am. R.), **was**, his usual means of gaining a hearing for the Gospel. For the Gospel was the blossoming of the Old Testament tree, the fulfilment of its promises. **And for three sabbath days**, when synagogues held public services, **reasoned with them out of the scriptures**, doubtless using every opportunity for discussion and private interviews during the busy week days.

THREE OF PAUL'S METHODS OF TEACHING THE BIBLE.

His Purpose was to Persuade the People to Believe in Jesus as the Messiah, the Saviour of the World.

First Method. **Reasoning with them out of the Scriptures**, v. 2. He reasoned with them, presenting arguments and proofs. "Here the word may point to a conversational intercourse between St. Paul and his fellow-countrymen. That such interchange of speech could take place in the synagogue we learn from Matt. 12 : 9–12. In classical Greek . . . the word means 'to discuss a question with another, arguing, but not necessarily with any hostile intent, — but as a father reasoneth with his sons.'" — *Exp. Gk. Test.* The Greek word is almost letter for letter our word "Dialogue." The method was more like that of our Bible classes than of our preaching. Discussion for the sake of seeing the truth from all sides is one of the best means of learning the truth. Freedom of discussion is the atmosphere wherein truth thrives with vigor and gains its victories. "To sit on the safety-valve is simply to invite an explosion." Reasoning, discussion, in good temper, is the best way of teaching in the Sunday School. It is more interesting, and more profitable. It is the custom of the best college professors to lecture to their classes, but also every little while to have a discussion, or to appoint some week evening to hold a seminar for discussion.

Out of the Scriptures, the common ground between them, which they acknowledged as true, and "every letter of which they valued as from God."

3. Opening and alleging, that Chrīst must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jē'ṣus, whom I preach unto you, is Chrīst.

Paul takes their scriptures and agrees with them that the prophecies of a Messiah are true, that all the glories foretold of him are correct descriptions of the Messiah who is to come. A mighty king who shall judge the poor of the people, and shall break in pieces the oppressor; who shall have dominion from sea to sea, yea all kings shall bow before him; all nations shall serve him (Ps. 72). "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Isa. 9).

We can almost hear them shouting "Amen," "Glory to God that is true," "He is the Messiah for whom we are waiting."

But Paul tells them that that is not the whole truth, the complete picture presented in their scriptures. You have neglected some parts of the scriptures.

What more or better can there be, if He would only come?

Listen. Have you read and understood what the book of Isaiah says about him in the 53d chapter? "He hath borne our griefs." "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities." "He was despised and rejected of men." "He was cut off from the land of the living." "The Lord shall make his soul an offering for sin."

We hear them declaring with impatience, "This cannot be, it is absurd to think such things of our promised Messiah."

Paul's Second Method was opening the Scriptures to them, v. 3, pointing out their deeper meaning, showing the relation of truths to one another, hitherto unperceived by them, and applying them to life. Read a few lines of Milton's *Comus*, which Ruskin quotes in his *Sesame and Lilies*, and then read his interpretation of them, and you will see how some Scriptures may be opened to you. There is enough for common daily guidance, but there are blessings untold in them when they are opened to us by the Spirit of God, through our own deeper experience and study, and the insight of others. Such opening of the Scriptures has come to me many times, in my studies for these *Notes*, and to every one who faithfully studies the Scriptures in his preparation for teaching. We often have reason to say, Whereas I was blind now I see.

Paul was to the Thessalonians like an expert who points out to the poor owner of a rocky farm the rich mines of gold and silver beneath the surface; or opens to the possessor of a common pasture the oil wells which are of more value than mines of silver. Science is continually opening the common things of life and finding in them greater treasure than the "Open, Sesame" in the *Arabian Nights*. So in business there are higher interpretations of God's laws in the gospel than was realized a few years ago.

"Upward we press, the air is clear,
And the sphere-music heard;
The Lord hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from his Word."

Hawthorne compares Christianity to a grand cathedral with divinely pictured windows. Viewed from without, it is impossible to gain the slightest conception of the beautiful forms and radiant colors manifest to those who look at them from within. So it is with Christ. There is a glory in him not visible to those without, but revealed to those who dwell in his heart of hearts. So any one who has seen the windows of the Cologne Cathedral transfigured by the light from dusky colors and obscure forms into pictures of prophets, apostles, and saints shining in "ruby, and purple, and gold," will understand how the Bible may be lighted up by the Holy Spirit, and by the uttered experience of holy men, with new and deeper meanings.

Paul thus opened the Scriptures to the Thessalonian Jews. He showed them that the Messiah **must needs have suffered** (Am. R., "It behooved the Christ to suffer"), for it was only by his atoning death that he could become the triumphant King they expected. And only by his rising again from the dead, could he accomplish his mission of salvation. There was no contradiction in the scriptures.

Paul's Third Method was alleging, not "affirming, or asserting" as is the use of the word in modern English, but with the older English usage when the Bible was trans-

4. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Sī'las; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

lated, "to set forth," to set the statements of the scripture beside the facts. Paul set beside the promises in the Old Testament the facts of Jesus' life and teachings, as we place a person beside his photograph, or his description, and showed that Jesus fulfilled every promise on which they based their ideas and their hopes of a Messiah deliverer.

As Schaff well expresses it: "After calling their attention to this or that well-known and often-read type or prophecy of Messiah, he would turn to the life and death of Jesus, and would ask them, Was not *this One*, after all, the Messiah, the Christ?"

One of the most excellent ways of teaching the Bible is to set its truths and promises over against the facts stating what it has accomplished, the men it has redeemed, the transformations of bad men into good men, the work it has accomplished in the past, and the rapid progress it is making toward the complete redemption of the world; in our own country with new enthusiasms and larger gifts than ever. Note what John R. Mott and Sherwood Eddy are doing in India and China.

Paul's manner of life contributed to his success, for he lived the Gospel he preached.

1. He remained in Thessalonica for several months: according to Ramsay, from December to the following May, so that the people had an excellent opportunity to know him.

2. Paul seems to have had a most attractive personality. He was a cultured gentleman, with unusual charm. "His work is simply unintelligible unless we assume that he had a boundless power of sympathizing with others and attaching them to himself." — *Ramsay.*

3. He supported himself by his work, working day and night that he might not be a burden to them (1 Thes. 2 : 9; 2 Thes. 3 : 8). For some reason he was peculiarly desirous that he should not be regarded as seeking for money, just as Moody and Sankey refused to receive any royalty on the sales of their Gospel Hymns lest people should think and say that they insisted on using the books in their revival meetings for the sake of the money. For this reason they sacrificed more than a million dollars; allowing some one else to use it for the good of the world.

It is quite possible, according to Farrar, that the reason why Paul undertook severe daily and nightly toil was that a "famine which was raging raised the price of wheat to six times its usual rate, and confirmed Paul in his purpose to place the motives of his ministry above suspicion by making it absolutely gratuitous."

4. Although he supported himself in part by working with his own hands (1 Thes. 2: 9), yet he remained there long enough to receive help twice from Philippi, a hundred miles away, and it is reasonable to think of some interval between the gifts.

5. Hard secular labor may be connected with great spirituality and successful labors in behalf of Christianity. See Wm. Gannett's booklet, *Blessed be Drudgery*, in which is described Murillo's picture of *The Angels in the Kitchen* (Louvre). See Lesson 6, 4th quarter.

6. He was gentle toward them as a nurse to her children (1 Thes. 2 : 7). He encouraged, comforted and exhorted them "as a father doth his children" (1 Thes. 2 : 11).

7. He lived a holy, unselfish, blameless life among them, giving them not only the gospel, but his very life (1 Thes. 2 : 5–8, 10).

The Fruits of Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica.

Verse 4 is a summary of Paul's success at the close of 5 or 6 months of gospel labors.

First: **Some of them**, the Jews, **believed** (Am. R., "were persuaded") **and consorted with Paul and Silas**, "associated with them as disciples . . . there was only a small minority of Jews, contrasted with a large number of born Gentiles." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

Illustration. They remind us of "a piteous story of a prisoner for years and years shut in a dungeon, his only light a narrow ray from a chink in the wall. His friends came at last with power to demolish the cruel barriers and let in a flood of God's sweet sunshine; but he, poor, pallid wretch, prayed that they would not destroy the walls and with them his precious chink, his one blessed gleam of light!"

Second: **Devout Greeks a great multitude**, converted from heathenism, having fewer prejudices or fixed opinions to overcome.

Third: **Chief women not a few**, ladies of the leading families and of highest social standing. "In Macedonia, as in Asia Minor, women had a freer and more influential

5. But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jā'son, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6. And when they found them not, they drew Jā'son and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7. Whom Jā'son hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæ'sar, saying that there is another king, *one* Jē'sus.

position than in Athens; and it is in conformity with the known facts that such prominence is assigned to them in the three Macedonian cities." — *Ramsay.*

Some one gave to a brilliant woman working for a good cause, the honorary degree of W. W., "Wonderful Woman," to be conferred by her children, grandchildren, and large circle of friends — so constantly is she assured that "there never was another such Wonderful Woman!" One sign — one of the greatest signs — of the progress of the world toward its ideal and goal is the increasing part women are taking in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the human race. The early Christians have set us a good example.

The Three Missionaries who were Turning the World Upside Down were Driven from Thessalonica, vs. 5–10. Paul's success was so great that at the end of six months the Jews became alarmed, and **took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort**, "vile fellows of the rabble, and gathering a crowd" (Am. R.). They **set all the city on an uproar**. They went to the house of Jason, but Paul and Silas were not there, **they drew**, Am. R., "dragged," **Jason and certain brethren**, Christians, **unto the rulers of the city.**

They charged them with harboring the men who had been turning the world upside down there just as they had done in Philippi.

Turning the world upside down. Their charge was a testimony to the power and extent of Christianity. Christ foretold this result (Matt. 10:34; Luke 12:53). It is the business of the gospel to turn the world upside down, so far as the wrong side is up in practice or principle. Whatever wrong is now enthroned, whatever sin is now popular, whatever evils seem to rule men, whatever falsehoods are flourishing, the gospel will cast down, and nothing can be settled till it is settled right. Nothing can remain on a solid foundation till the laws of God bear rule, till righteousness and love are supreme. The disturbances, the moral earthquakes, the wars, the revolutions, the uneasiness of society, are, in large measure, the signs of the process of turning the world right side up. The same process goes on in the individual heart, and it can never be at peace till selfishness, false doctrines, evil passions, and all worldly interests are put beneath, and love to God and man, and reason, and conscience rule the soul.

Bust of Claudius.
Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

Illustration. A Yorkshire local preacher using for his text, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also," divided his sermon thus: (1) The world at first was put right side up. (2) Sin came and turned it upside down. (3) The world has got to be set right again. (4) We are the chaps to do it. The Rev. Newman Hall, who gives this account, says of it, "A plain way of putting grand truths. It is no mere superficial improvement the gospel effects, but a revolution in character — whether of individuals or of society. And by the help of God the Christian Church has to do this work, can do it, and can alone do it."

The second charge was more serious. It was treason against Rome, a conspiracy to dethrone the rightful Emperor, Claudius, and place **another king, one Jesus** upon the

8. And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9. And when they had taken security of Jā'sŏn, and of the other, they let them go.

10. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Sī'las by night unto Bĕ-rē'a: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11. These were more noble than those in Thĕs-sa-lō-nī'ca, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

12. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

13. But when the Jews of Thĕs-sa-lō-nī'ca had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Bĕ-rē'a, they came hither also, and stirred up the people.

14. And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Sī'las and Tī-mō'the-ŭs abode there still.

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throne. "This was a skilfully planned charge. At that time treason was interpreted in a wide sense, and was very severely punished; anything that could be construed as disrespect to the Emperor was treason, and to speak of another Emperor or King was an unpardonable crime." — *Professor Ramsay* in *Pictures of the Apostolic Church.*

It was very easy for the heathen to misapprehend the Christian teaching about Christ as a King of whose kingdom the apostles were heralds. Jesus himself had been misunderstood and his words perverted. "We can scarcely now realize the suspicions which must have been aroused against the early preachers of Christianity by the very language they used." The Jews looked upon the expected Messiah as a worldly king. Jesus proclaimed himself to be the Messiah. Jesus was King. He was coming again. His kingdom was to triumph over the world. It was the duty of every one to be subject to this King. Nor was it easy for the Gentiles to see how this was a purely spiritual kingdom, and was the very best possible force in all honest worldly government. The charge seemed very plausible that Jesus was the rival of Cæsar in his own empire.

The authorities took the easiest way to escape the threatened danger. It was not wise to have a public trial, or to do anything that might get to the ears of the Emperor Claudius at Rome, and make trouble for the city and its rulers. Hence they merely took security from Jason and his friends, properly a pecuniary surety or bail, *sufficient* to protect against loss, by depositing a sum of money which would be forfeited if anything illegal or treasonable was done by them or by the missionaries. It is thought that this is one reason why Paul did not return there, as he greatly desired to do, a desire expressed in his letters written a few months later (1 Thes. 2 : 17, 18 ; 3 : 10). The "hindrance of Satan" to Paul's return (1 Thes. 2 : 18), Professor Ramsay suggests, was this ingenious device suggested to the rulers by Satan, of the security given by Jason. Till there was some change in policy or government, Paul could not return without endangering Jason and his friends. —*Ramsay's St. Paul*, pp. 229, 230. So Paul, Silas and Timothy were sent safely away. Timothy is not mentioned, because he was young, and only an attendant and helper of Paul. He was with the two missionaries at Berea.

II. **PAUL'S EXPERIENCE AT BEREA**, vs. 10–15. THE STORY OF THE EFFECT OF BIBLE STUDY ON THE MAKING OF CHARACTER. In the evening following the release of Jason, Paul and Silas and probably Timothy, who had all been hidden in some place of safety from the mob, were **immediately sent away** to **Berea**, a small city about 50 miles S.W. of Thessalonica on the eastern slope of the Olympian range. Here Paul remained three months (May to August A.D. 51, according to Ramsay) and founded a church whose fame has come down to us because they **searched the scriptures daily**. This church consisted of the same classes as the church in Thessalonica. (1) **Many of them**, the Jews, **believed**, as the result of their faithful study of the scriptures. (2) **honourable women which were Greeks** (Am. R., "Greek women of honorable estate"); (3) **and of men**, Greeks, **not a few**, including both men and women, as the Greek word expresses both.

15. And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Ath'ens: and receiving a commandment unto Si'las and Ti-mo'the-us for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

14. After several weeks the Thessalonian Jews interfered, "stirring up and troubling the multitudes" (Am. R.), and Paul was conducted to Athens in Greece while Silas and Timothy remained a while longer in Berea. **To go as it were to the sea,** Am. Rev., "to go as far as the sea."

Continuing our Bible studies, we will consider the Berean method, v. 11. The Bereans **were more noble than those in Thessalonica** for two reasons.

First. **They received the word with all readiness of mind.** Their minds were open to receive the truth of God as fast and as far as it was revealed to them. They were not afraid of it because it was new. And this open-mindedness is noble, because each new truth, each old truth revealing new meanings and applications to life, each new vision with the magical qualities of Mr. Titbottom's spectacles in *Prue and I*, each victory over prejudice or ignorance or selfishness that dreads the effect of new truth on social standing or business, — all these enlarge the soul, elevate the character, and burn out the dross.

Second. **And searched** ("Examining," Am. R.) **the scriptures.** They did not take things by hearsay, but sought the truth for themselves. "Search for the truth is the noblest occupation of man." — *Madame de Staël.* Such searchers are noble because they are governed by the highest qualities of mind and heart, and because they received the truth only on good evidence. "There is no escape from the conclusion that ignorance of the Scriptures is ignoble. He who has learned from all other books is still a fool if he has neglected this. Plato says, 'He who loves voluntary falsehood is not to be trusted; but he who loves involuntary falsehood is a fool.'" — *Monday Club Sermons.* "There are some things about religion that can be known. Uncertainty about religious truth, where certainty is attainable, is unmanly." — *Horace Bushnell.* To have at hand the best book ever written, the best literature in the world, the best guide through life, the highest moral and spiritual principles, and neglect to read it is a shame and disgrace. For it gives the largest, fullest, widest education. It educates all the faculties of the soul. It trains for the best life in this world, and for the world to come.

MODERN WAYS OF SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES.

1. We need to study the Bible that we may know Jesus Christ, to love and obey him, as our Saviour and King.

2. We need to study the Bible for our guide through life. If we read the last two chapters in the Bible, we will see that they are the ideal and goal of the whole history of man. They are the answer to the Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." They are the ideal and goal which every person and nation should seek to realize. How can they find the way without studying the Bible as their Guide Book?

3. Know the Bible from beginning to end.

4. Learn the choicest passages by heart.

If I were to live my life over again, I would learn much more by heart than I did in my youth, — the best hymns, the choicest passages from the poets and other literature, and especially the most surpassing spiritual, life-giving, and life-guarding portions of Holy Scripture. There are no better companions, no better teachers, than an intimate communion with the best people, the best thoughts, the most glorious truths in the world.

"Recollection is the only Paradise from which we cannot be turned out."

> "A Land of Promise, a land of memory,
> A Land of Promise flowing with the milk
> And honey of delicious memories."

I most earnestly and urgently hope that the next International Committee will present us with one year's course in which the Scripture selections will consist of the choicest passages which every scholar and every person ought to know by heart, engraved into their memories, and souls and lives.

5. *The Literary Method.* There is a great variety of literary forms in the Bible — history, story, biography, autobiography, arguments, orations, sermons, conversa-

tions, poetry in lyric, dramatic, idyllic, and epic forms, hymns, songs, epistles, parables, proverbs, fables, enigmas, metaphors, hyperboles, epigrams. The recognition of this fact enables us to understand the Bible better.

Rev. Dr. Aked of California gives a good example in an article in a recent *Sunday School Times*. "A few Sundays ago I preached from Job 2 : 4, 'All that a man hath will he give for his life.' I began by saying, 'I thank God, this is a lie.' Some of the people looked surprised. But it was Satan who said the wicked thing, and it is Satan's libel upon human nature, Satan's blasphemy against the human race. The president of one of our theological seminaries was present. He told me at the close of the service that a young man, a candidate for the ministry, preached from that text his trial sermon. He accepted Satan's words as gospel, declared their truth, and preached his evangelical message from the diabolical slander. The college admitted the man ! It seems to me a disgrace. That very verse says, 'And Satan answered Jehovah,' etc." The result will be that all other forms of Bible study will have a double value. All references to the Bible in literature will find their place in the Bible history, recall and illuminate it along its whole course. For literature is full of the Bible. Shakespeare alone has more than five hundred and fifty quotations, allusions, or sentiments from the Bible ; Tennyson has four hundred and sixty.

LESSON II. — July 9.

THE THESSALONIAN CHRISTIANS. — 1 Thes. 1; 2:17–20; 4:13–18.

PRINT 1 Thes. 1; 4:13–18. COMMIT 4:16, 17.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him.* — 1 Thes. 4 : 14.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The teacher may hold the attention of his class through the whole session by calling their attention to

The Order of the Red Spot

as reported by Dr. F. E. Clark in the *Christian Endeavor World*.

"The Erie Railway system is one of the greatest in the United States and, indeed, one of the greatest in the world. In order to secure the loyalty, efficiency, and coöperation of its employees, its officers have adopted 'The Order of the Red Spot,' an organization for locomotive engineers only. When an engineer meets the full requirements for membership in 'efficiency, management, cleanliness, and economy,' he is entitled to have a red spot painted on the front of his locomotive as a background to the engine's number. On each division of the Erie system the engineer who has had the longest record of competent service is also allowed to have his name painted on his engine in gold letters.

"All this simply spells Recognition, and it appeals to one of the deepest and most natural instincts in the human heart. They are proud of having a red-spot engine, and still more of having their names displayed on it in gold letters. Proud of it, and justly so, for it tells of faithfulness, honesty, and efficiency."

Paul's letter to the Thessalonians is the bestowal on them of such an Order, telling of their Christian efficiency in religion and virtue. And we, as we study this lesson, should recognize in them the virtues Paul praises and strive to make them our own.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Paul was a missionary in Thessalonica 5 or 6 months (Ramsay), or 3 months according to others. A.D. 50, 51.

Time when the epistle was written. — About six months after Paul was driven from the city.

Place. — Written at Corinth (Acts 18 : 11), during his residence there of a year and a half.

Place in the History. — About the middle of the Second Missionary Journey.

The Epistle is not only the first recorded letter of Paul, but is the earliest of the New Testament writings that have come down to us. Gospels, or lives of Christ, were doubtless written long before, but have not been preserved.

LEARN BY HEART.

1 Thes. 5 : 16–24.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians.
How long was Paul with them?
Who were his helpers?
What was the character of the church?
Name the good things Paul said of them.
Comfort for those whose friends were "asleep in Jesus."
The second coming of Christ.
"Edifying one another."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: A Delightful Picture of a Church Beautiful, with its Lessons for us.

I. THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

II. THE CHURCH OF THE SHINING LIGHT, 1 : 1–9; 2 : 17–20.

III. PAUL COMFORTS THE THESSALONIANS CONCERNING THOSE WHO DIED BEFORE THE SECOND ADVENT, 4 : 13–18.

IV. THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH AND THE COUNTRY LIES IN THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH HAS ITS SOURCE IN FAITH, 5 : 14–24.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Expositor's Greek Testament, vol. 4. Farrar's *Messages of the Books* is probably the best and most helpful. *Commentaries on Thessalonians*, as *Cambridge Bible, Expositor's Bible, Westminster New Testament, New Century Bible.* Lillie and Lightfoot on *Thessalonians.* G. G. Finlay's *Epistles of Paul.*

I. **THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.** "Three missionaries driven away from Philippi by a mob could be seen drawing near to the flourishing seaport of Thessalonica (modern Saloniki), the second city in Europe to receive the Gospel, — two of them torn and bruised by a terrible flagellation at Philippi, emerging from the lowest dungeon of a prison, their whole aspect bespeaking 'their poverty, their sufferings, their earthly insignificance.'" They were Paul, Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy. They immediately began to preach the gospel, while they supported themselves by "weaving black goats-hair into tent cloth." The people were idolaters, and spoke the Greek language which was familiar to the missionaries.

Women weaving tent-cloth.

They had great success in transforming many heathen into Christians, and founded a flourishing church there. In a few months (some say three, others, five or six), they were accused of turning the world upside down, and were driven from the city, before Paul had completed his work there.

Paul soon began a new gospel campaign in Corinth, a flourishing city of Greece. It was with great reluctance that Paul left Thessalonica. He loved them with a deep affection, and they loved him. He felt their need of further instruction in the Gospel truths, more training in the Christian life, more comfort, strengthening, guidance, organization.

Therefore he sent Timothy back to them to learn how they were prospering and what things they most needed. Timothy was a young man, and not involved in the persecution, and therefore could quietly enter the city and confer with the church there.

Timothy's Report. 1. That the church was in a very favorable moral condition, was flourishing bravely, and was "already developing the most beautiful graces of the Christian life."

2. That there were severe persecutions and hardships, but the disciples rejoiced in spite of them.

3. That there had been calumnies and false charges against Paul by the enemies of Christianity, — that Paul was acting with self-seeking aims; suspicions had been raised with regard to his character and motives.

4. That the disciples were greatly troubled and discouraged because some had died before the promised second coming of Christ.

1. Paul, and Sĭl-vā′nus, and Tĭ-mō′the-ŭs, unto the church of the Thĕs-sa|lō′nĭ-ans *which is* in God the Father and *in* the Lord Jē′şus Chrīst: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jē′şus Chrīst.

2. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

On the receipt of this report of Timothy nearly six months after his expulsion, from Thessalonica, Paul "bade Timothy who had just arrived from his visit to them, to sit down and write while he dictated. Doubtless he would have written a letter with his own hand as he did to the Galatians, but the chronic weakness of his eye-sight rendered it difficult and painful for him to do so." — *Farrar.*

Characteristics of this Letter.

"Its style is unusually simple."

"There is not a word of controversy in it."

"A fatherly spirit breathes in every line."

"It is in all respects a letter of consolation."

"Two words strike the key-notes of its two most important sections — 'affliction' and 'advent.'"

"In tribulation, yet with joy of the Holy Ghost."

"The first three chapters are mainly personal and historical, the last two mainly hortatory." — *Farrar's Messages of the Books.*

One way in which we all may follow Paul's example is by means of

The League of the Golden Pen.

The story of The League of the Golden Pen, whose members write at least one letter of cheer each month, is told by the Rev. E. H. Byington, the founder, in a leaflet which will be furnished by The Sunday School Times Co., together with the attractive membership card, for five cents. In orders of five or more the leaflet and cards may be obtained at the rate of two cents for each leaflet and each card.

"The League appeals to almost everybody, because it has no dues, no meetings, no machinery, and yet affords a means of helpfulness within the power of all.

"One of the best suggestions of the League is that of writing letters to children.

"A fellow pastor, when abroad, sent a postal card, with a personal message, to one of his Sunday-school boys, who on receiving it ran down the street telling everybody that his minister had written to him from England. The card was prized among his treasures and enhanced the influence of the pastor over the boy.

"We have found it exceedingly helpful to print in the Church Bulletin letters, poems and extracts, which may be used by members of the League.

"Especially may letters be used to win people to Christ.

"This League is just the thing for timid people who have little faculty for talking. Some of them develop a gift for writing just the right thing at the right time." — *Rev. William D. Marsh, D.D.*, in the *Sunday School Times.*

II. **THE CHURCH OF THE SHINING LIGHT**, 1 : 1–9 ; 2 : 17–20. Paul gives us a wonderfully beautiful picture of the church he loved so well. And it is well for us to note in this picture the things which may encourage and strengthen us.

First. Paul begins with the usual beautiful greeting in his letters, by wishing them **Grace and Peace** from the source of them both. "Grace" is God's loving favor surrounding the church like an atmosphere, and causing all graces to spring up and flourish. The word primarily means that which gives joy, the beauty, loveliness, goodness, which bring delight. The graces express the "beauty of holiness." Thence, kindness, favor, good will, — the loving spirit which inspires those virtues. Then naturally the gifts and favors which are the fruit and expression of good will. Of all these Jesus was full, as well as our Father in heaven, and His grace will produce in us **grace** for **grace**, till we shall be like Him.

Second. The three missionaries not only gave **thanks to God always**, and "prayed without ceasing," but also remembered without ceasing their *work of faith.* For what the Christians of Thessalonica had done, — turning **from idols to serve the living and true God**, overcoming the sins and impurities of heathenism, transforming idolaters into children of God, building up a community of Christians that Paul could love so earnestly, abounding in joy of the Holy Ghost in the midst of the fires of affliction and persecution, — these works required a great and living *Faith* in God.

3. Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jē'şus Chrīst, in the sight of God and our Father;

4. Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

The Work of Faith. "There can be no other scientific measure of a force than the effect it produces. . . . Works are the standard of measurement of Faith. Faith is the driving power that turns man back from his tendency to degradation, and starts him in the course of movement toward God." "Faith working through love is the law of the Christian life." — *Ramsay.*

——"Faith and works are bells of full accord."——

Not only is it for the older ones to "encourage, summon, inspire by word and by example," as in the lines —

"A poor man saved by thee shall make thee rich;
A sick man helped by thee shall make thee strong;
Thou shalt thyself be served by every lease
Of service thou hast rendered,"—

but even young children can have the faith that works, and follow the Blue Bird motto "To Sing, to Grow, and to Help," and Edward Everett Hale's motto in his *Ten Times One is Ten,*

"Look up not down;
Look out not in;
Look forward not back;
and Lend a hand."

Third. Their Labor of Love. Labor "is a stronger word than 'work,' and points to painful effort. Love is capable of going beyond faith in inspiring and sustaining painful effort." — *New Century Bible.* "'Work' points to the thing done, 'labor' to the pains spent in doing it. Work may be easy and delightful; labor is toilsome; no selfish man will endure it for another's good. How a mother will toil and weary herself because she loves her child." — *Cambridge Bible.*

Love is the greatest motive power to urge us on to labor for Christ and his kingdom, for the good of mankind. The doing of hard tasks becomes interesting, enthusiastic, when our hearts are filled with love. Professor Wm. H. Thomson, in his *Brain and Personality*, points out the remarkable physiological power of what is called "interest" to resist either bodily exhaustion or decay. If a man expended the same amount of muscular exhaustion sawing wood which he does climbing rocks or wading streams after trout, he would faint dead away. Interest is the soul of the Will. Love is the greatest force for accomplishing hard tasks for a worthy cause.

Fourth. The Patience of Hope. The trial of their patience was so severe that nothing could have endured under it but that patience which sprang from their hope **in our Lord Jesus Christ**, of his appearing and kingdom. And "so did they endure as seeing Him who is invisible" (Heb. 11 : 27). — *Dr. John Lillie.* The Greek word for patience implies active endurance that "both bears up, and steers right onward," in the midst of persecution, and expectation long delayed. "Never to tire, never to grow cold, to be patient, sympathetic, tender, to look for the budding flower and the opening heart, to hope always, to love always — this is duty."

"The wise and true
Crave not for lofty tasks, but turn the small
To greatness by the great heart doing all for God."

For children. "A lady, noticing a small boy who was having frequent mishaps on the ice with a pair of new skates, said to him: 'Why, sonny, you are getting all bumped up. I wouldn't stay on the ice and keep falling down so; I'd just come off and watch the others.' With tears on his cheeks the child looked from his adviser to his skates, and replied: 'I didn't get some new skates to give up with: I got 'em to learn how with.'" — *J. R. Miller*, in *Record of Christian Work.*

Fifth. Chosen of God, v. 4, **knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God,** Am. R., "brethren beloved of God, your election." God had chosen them because they were willing to become fitted to be his instruments in building up his kingdom. They had a mission from God. He chose them from the heathen people around them, to accomplish his purposes. "Work out your own salvation . . . for it is

5. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Hō'lў Ghōst, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

6. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Hō'lў Ghōst:

7. So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Măç-ę-dō'nĭ-à and Â-chā'ià.

8. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Măç-ę-dō'nĭ-à and Â-chā'ià, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9. For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

10. And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jē'şus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2 : 12, 13). God's choices and our free-wills unite in giving us the greatest blessings and the most useful lives possible for us.

Sixth. Paul defends himself from the charges of those who had slandered him, as described in chapter 2. Such charges as deceit, uncleanness, guile, flattering words, covetousness, men-pleasers.

His answer was to place himself and his whole life before them, just as they themselves had seen him and known him, — **ye know what manner of men we were among you** ("we showed ourselves toward you," Am. R.) **for your sake** (v. 5). "Whatever enemies might say, the Thessalonians knew that their teachers had borne no resemblance to the mercenary quacks who in that day swarmed throughout the empire; that no deceit, no avarice, no flattery, no subterranean motives had mingled with the exhortations. They knew the diligence, the unselfishness, the disinterested independence, the affectionate enthusiasm, in which the mission to them had been characterised." — *Farrar.*

It is easy to see how another's character may be distorted by looking at it through prejudice or ignorance. I have often noticed when riding in the cars that if I look through some glass windows the rails by the side of the train look crinkled and twisted, because of imperfections in the glass through which I am looking.

Seventh. The Thessalonians as Missionaries. From the Thessalonian church **sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia,** — Philippi, Berea in the north, **and Achaia,** — in Corinth in the south, **but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad** (v. 8) by which a great community was transformed **from idols** with their immorality and hopelessness, into the service of **the living and true God.** Nor was this an easy task, for they **received the word in much affliction but** also in the triumphant **joy of the Holy Ghost.**

4:13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14. For if we believe that Jē′sus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jē′sus will God bring with him.

15. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17. Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Illustration. "The highest philosophy of human life she used in her management of this little plant world; for, burying the weeds at the roots of the flowers, the evil was made to minister to the good; and the nettle, the plantain and all their kind were transmuted by nature's fine chemistry into pinks, lilies and roses." — *Eliza Calvert Hall* in *Aunt Jane of Kentucky.*

It is no wonder that Paul could say of this church, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." (2:19, 20.)

III. **PAUL COMFORTS THE THESSALONIAN DISCIPLES CONCERNING THOSE WHO DIED BEFORE THE SECOND ADVENT OF JESUS,** 4:13–18. There was one trouble that the Thessalonian Christians felt deeply through a misunderstanding of Paul's teachings concerning the coming again of the risen Jesus in his Kingdom, which was frequently represented as near, and yet also as at a distant but unknown future. Paul's teachings concerning the risen Christ implied that Jesus was coming again. Some of the Thessalonian Christians had fallen asleep in Jesus, before his second coming, and their friends were distressed lest these should fail to have a part in the great event.

Paul comforted the disciples, first, by assuring them that Jesus, the risen, everliving Saviour and King was certainly coming again in his kingdom in glory, when he should **descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel**; and secondly by assuring them that all the disciples of Jesus, whether sleeping the sleep of death — for **the dead in Christ shall rise first**, — or alive at the time of his coming, would all **be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air**, — all to dwell forever with the Lord, in one glorious company when the kingdom has fully come, and God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

Paul's description of the second coming has not yet been fulfilled. But Paul and the disciples were not mistaken as to its nearness.

The difficulty of the early disciples was in failing to realize that the second coming of Christ was an Era, an epoch, in which there were several stages each of which was a coming of the Era, as spring comes on March 21, astronomically, but we recognize its coming with the first flowers, or the balmy days, and at last in its full glories of blossoms, green fields, warm days, and the full awakening of the earth to life. The destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple, which closed the old Dispensation, and ushered in the New, took place about 18 years after this epistle was written, and was a real, and great stage of the coming of Jesus, which his declaration, repeated four times in the Gospels, stated should occur while some of those who heard him would be living.

IV. **THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH AND OF OUR COUNTRY LIES IN THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH HAS ITS SOURCE IN FAITH,** 5:14–24. Paul closes this epistle "with moral exhortations of extraordinary force, freshness and beauty: little arrow-flights of sentences, unique in their originality, and pregnant in meaning." — *Farrar.* (Read them in the class.)

And these heavenly virtues were to be practised in the midst of fierce persecutions from the people around them. They were to overcome evil with good.

Exactly thus should be the Christian Church in the midst of the evils and wrongs around us. And the only thing that can save our country, and bring it nearer to the kingdom of heaven, and make it a power for good in the world is a Revival of Righteousness and justice by a new consecration to our Leader and King Jesus Christ, and his heavenly Kingdom.

Mighty evils still confront us, mighty wrongs still need to be righted. And the united Christian forces, putting on the whole armor of God, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, girded with truth, defended by righteousness, moving swiftly on feet shod with the gospel, " the good tidings " of peace, — must either conquer by these heavenly powers, or be involved in a physical warfare led by the principalities and powers of evil.

The Christian forces in our country have made great and real progress and are spending much energy, time, money and consecration, in overcoming the evils, but still we need to take to heart President Wilson's proclamation for Oct. 4, 1914 as a national day of prayer; especially his closing words:

President Woodrow Wilson:

That " in His mercy and goodness showing a way where men can see none, He vouchsafe His children to heal again and restore once more that concord among men and nations without which there can be neither happiness nor true friendship nor any wholesome fruit of toil or thought in the world; praying also to this end that He forgive us our sins, our ignorance of His holy will, our wilfulness and many errors, and lead us in the paths of obedience to places of vision and to thoughts and counsels that purge and make wise."

Carl Schurz:

Whatever may be necessary for the defence of our coast, and for our safety, we may well receive into our inmost souls the words of Carl Schurz: " I am confident our strongest, most effective, most trustworthy and infinitely the cheapest coast defence will consist in ' Fort Justice,' ' Fort Good Sense,' ' Fort Self-respect,' ' Fort Good Will,' and, if international differences really do arise, ' Fort Arbitration.'

" This republic can have no other armament so effective as the weapons of peace. Its security, its influence, its happiness and its glory will be . . . best maintained by that justice which is the duty of all; by that generous regard not only for the rights, but also the self-respect of others, which is the distinguishing mark of the true gentleman; and by that patient forbearance which is the most gracious virtue of the strong."

C. Silvester Horne:

The late C. Silvester Horne, one of the brightest of the English preachers wrote: " We are manifestly on the eve of new applications of Christ's teaching which will revive the interest of the people in Christianity to a surprising degree.

" The watchword of our new century is Justice. It will create a splendid army of prophets, men and women will have to buy the new inheritance at a great price. But buy it they will; for the master passion in the breasts of the noblest of our young men is that the will of the Father shall be done ' on earth as it is in heaven.'

" They are resolved that men and women shall not always be subjected to the legion of temptations that centre in the gaming hell and the saloon. They are resolved that human conditions of labor and life in the factory and on the land shall be substituted for conditions which made health and happiness almost impossible. In other words, they have caught the glow of the idealism of the great Jewish prophets who saw in vision the Messianic age, and hailed it as the destined day of God."

LESSON III. — July 16.

PAUL AT ATHENS. — Acts 17:16–34.

PRINT vs. 22–34. COMMIT vs. 22, 23.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* — Acts 17:28.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

On the previous Sunday see that some of the scholars are provided with pictures of the celebrated city of Athens, and have them report to the rest of the class, and answer questions. The penny pictures will give a fair idea, but the pictures used in the stereoscope will give a better idea of the places and the people.

Another scholar, or a small group of them should have as large a map as can

be obtained, and trace the journey of Paul from Berea, and the situation of Athens. From the lesson on the voyage of Paul, can be shown the kind of ship he probably sailed in from the seaport of Berea to Athens.

Another can describe the kinds of people who lived in the city, as Jews, Stoics, etc. (vs. 17, 18, 21).

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul reached Athens late in August or early in Sept. A.D. 51, a few days after the last lesson, giving time for Paul's journey from Berea to Athens. He probably remained there three or four weeks.

Place. — Athens the capital of Greece, and one of the three most renowned, and influential cities in the Ancient World, each of them still existing.

The Missionaries. — Paul was alone at Athens, till Silas and Timothy came but they were soon sent away, Timothy to Thessalonica (1 Thes. 3 : 1, 2), and Silas probably to Philippi where Luke had been left.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Commentaries on Acts named in Lesson I, and others. *St. Paul the Orator*, by Maurice Jones, B.D. (Doran). *The Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day*, Professor Ramsay. *St. Paul the Traveller*, Professor Ramsay. Maclaren's *Expositions, Acts*, vol. 2. *The Life and Work of Paul*, by Farrar. *Paul the Missionary*, by Dr. Wm. M. Taylor.

For Athens ; any *History of Greece* will give the events, the literature, and the persons which have made its renown. *Hastings's Bible Dictionary* presents Athens as it appeared in Paul's time. Rackham in *Westminster Commentary on Acts*, has an excellent description of Athens in the time of Paul.

LEARN BY HEART.

Psalms 19 : 1–3 ; vs. 27, 28, 30.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The city of Athens in the time of Paul.
A glimpse of its history and literature.
Five words in this passage, which need interpretation.
How many classes of people are mentioned?
The Areopagus.
Paul's argument.
Why Paul was dismissed when he spoke of the resurrection of the dead.
Reasons why Paul had less success at Athens than elsewhere.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Story of St. Paul at Athens.

I. ATHENS IN THE TIME OF PAUL.
II. PAUL BEGINS HIS WORK IN ATHENS, VS. 16–18.
III. PAUL'S ADDRESS BEFORE THE AREOPAGUS COUNCIL, VS. 19–31.
IV. THE RESULTS OF PAUL'S WORK AT ATHENS, VS. 32–34.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Paul a Herald of the Cross is a story by Florence M. Kingsley.

Pausanias' *Description of Greece* (Bohn's Classical Library) is most interesting to everyone, because he saw Athens in the height of its literary glory and architectural splendor, and it is specially interesting to the Bible student because it amply confirms and illustrates the details of St. Paul's visit.

Plato's account of Socrates' opinions.

For children, good illustrations may be found in Hamilton's *Mountain Path* (Doran), "Poisoned Eyes," and "The Book to be Read in a Mirror."

THE LESSON IN ART.

St. Paul preaching at Athens, by Bida, Raphael.

The School at Athens, Raphael.

I. **ATHENS IN THE TIME OF ST. PAUL.** Paul had been driven by the mob from Berea, as we learned in our last lesson. He sailed from Dium, the nearest port to Berea, and after a voyage of 200 miles, in two or three days, reached Athens. The journey by land was about 250 miles and would occupy twelve days, so that Professor Ramsay considers that probably Paul was in Athens less than a fortnight when Silas and Timothy joined him there according to his earnest request. He seems to have immediately sent Timothy to Thessalonica, and Silas to Philippi, and was left alone the remainder of his stay at Athens.

The city of Athens. In order to understand Paul's work and address at Athens, it is necessary to keep in mind the city and its peculiar conditions. For Athens was one of the three most renowned cities in the history of the world, — Jerusalem for the true Religion, the most influential city in the world for religion; Rome for Power and Law, the then political capital of the world; and Athens for Literature and Art, the artistic and literary capital of the world.

From a photograph.

View of Athens.

The Acropolis, the highest point of the city.

1. *The city* has one of the most beautiful situations in the world. "Four famous mountains lie around it, and four still more famous hills are within the city."

"We learn from Pliny that at the time of Nero, Athens contained over three thousand public statues, besides a countless number of lesser images within the walls of private houses. Of this number the great majority were statues of gods, demi-gods, or heroes. In one street there stood before every house a square pillar carrying upon it a bust of the god Hermes. Every gateway and porch carried its protecting god. Every street, every square, nay, every purlieu, had its sanctuaries, and a Roman poet bitterly remarked that it was easier in Athens to find gods than men." — *G. S. Davies, St. Paul in Greece.*

Athene Parthenos.

A statuette in the Central Museum in Athens, probably a copy of Phidias' great statue of Athena, with pedestal. It was 75 feet high, was placed on the Acropolis 500 feet above the sea level, and was made by Phidias from the spoils taken at Marathon from the defeated Persians in 490 B.C.

Among these was Phidias' famous statue of Athena (Minerva), in the Parthenon, "with the face, hands and feet of pure ivory, and the figure draped in coverings of pure gold, worth more than half a million dollars." This statue, 75 feet high, with helmet and spear, stood on the Acropolis, where it was a landmark for sailors.

2. Athens was the seat of the greatest University in the Roman empire. "Her streets were crowded with students. The education of the Roman aristocrat could not be considered complete without a course of study at Athens." — *Rackham.*

"Athens in its prime sent forth more great men in one hundred years than all the rest of the world could show in five hundred." Recall such world-famous names as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Æschylus, Sophocles, Aristides, Themistocles, Phidias, Zeno, Epicurus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Pericles. The writings of many of these are read to-day with great interest.

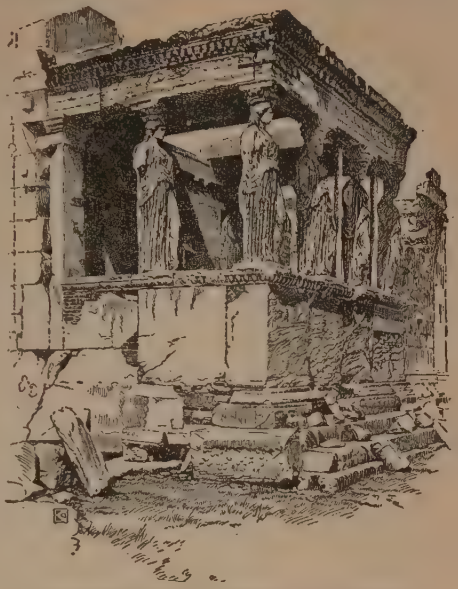
"Every one of the schools of Philosophy had its headquarters in Athens, — the Academy of Plato, the Lyceum of Aristotle, the Porch of Zeno the Stoic, the Garden of Epicurus." — *Rackham.*

3. *The Religion of Athens.* Religion, art,

and philosophy were closely allied. "Her citizens indeed had always been noted for their religious character, and the solemnity and multiplicity of their festivals." — *Rackham.* "Underlying all the splendor and artistic beauty, forming the very soul and spirit of the scene in all its wonderful richness, was the demon of idolatry. . . . To this alone Paul ascribed the terrible degeneration which had reduced the world to a state of absolute helplessness; and because of it the world lay in the darkness of sin and despair." — *Maurice Jones* in *Paul the Orator.*

"With man's moral life the gods had nothing to do, for they were themselves shameless in their loves and hates. . . . A man's religion had nothing whatever to do with the conscience or the inward relation of God to the soul." — *Dr. H. T. Sell* in *S. S. Times.* There was real truth in the original teachings of Epicurus and of Zeno. But both the teaching and the practice of their followers had degenerated. There was a denial of life after death.

"The gods of Homer and Virgil are not only feasting gods, but roistering, bacchanalian, drunken gods. They are not only sensuous, marrying and giving in marriage; they are openly and grossly licentious; adultery and rape are divine. They are vindictive, passionate, intriguing, mendacious. Well cried Vespasian on his deathbed, 'Woe is me, for I am about to become a god.'"



The Southern Porch or Portico of the Erechtheum.

A small but very beautiful temple to the worship of Athene, built beside the Parthenon on the Acropolis at Athens, by Erechtheus, a mythical king of Athens, some time toward the close of the fifth century B.C.

II. **PAUL BEGINS HIS MINISTRY IN ATHENS**, vs. 16–18. *First.* Paul finds his bearings by studying the city and its people, as we have seen them above. He notes the conditions and circumstances and trends of thought. He sees that with all their boasted freedom four out of every five were slaves, leaving one quarter of the population at leisure to spend **their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing** (v. 21). **He saw the city wholly given to idolatry**, Am. R., "full of idols." So that **his spirit was stirred in him**, "burning with indignation," his soul like a flaming volcano, that all this beauty and wealth, and learning, and genius, should be dedicated to idols, instead of to the true God and the uplifting of the human race. His soul was burning to save the Athenians from the hopelessness of idolatry, and the darkness of sin and despair, to the blessedness of the Kingdom of heaven.

Second. **Therefore disputed he**, discussed, argued, reasoned, **in the synagogue with the Jews.** As always he began with the Jews, with whom, as worshippers of the true God, there was a common basis of truth. But with no special success.

Third. He conversed **with the devout persons** who had accepted the true God of the Jews, and were conscious of a deep religious need.

Fourth. Paul was accustomed to go into the Agora, or market place, the great busy central square of the city. "It was an open square in the centre of the city, like St. Mark's Place in Venice, which served as the focus of the civic life. Around it were grouped the public buildings of the city, — temples, senate house, town hall and law courts. Besides these there were **stoas**, *i.e.* porticoes or colonnades;" the rest would be filled up with shops, or bazaars. Within this square beat the heart of the city.

"All the morning this Agora was the scene of market, and crowded with country people, buyers and sellers, merchants and business men, magistrates and civic functionaries.

" Business over, it became the resort of the idle, gossips, newsmongers, fashionable loungers, and fellows of the rabble. Hither came all who wanted an audience, — philosophers, teachers, declaimers.

" In this Agora Socrates used to practice his dialectic. He would arrest the passers-by, and by a rigorous cross-examination try to destroy their superficial self-confidence, and to arouse in them some desire for better things.

" And now, 450 years later, a second Socrates is seen daily to REASON IN THE MARKET PLACE. This was Saint Paul. He would not lack hearers, for his teaching would fully satisfy the Athenian desire for something new and strange." — *Rackham.*

Fifth. Paul meets the Athenian philosophers and " they cross swords." The Epicureans made pleasure or happiness the aim and object of life. They had degenerated during the four centuries since Epicurus taught ; and believed in a life of pleasure and of gratifying every sensual desire. " Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die," and that is the end of life. This was the opposite of Christ's teaching as to happiness, as to a life of virtue and love and righteousness, and as to eternal life.

The Stoics were the other school of philosophy, much nearer the true life than the Epicureans, but hopeless of immortality, comfortless and weak as to the present life; infinitely below what man needs, and the Gospel gives. They were pantheists, believing that God was the soul of the world, that everything was governed by fate, that there was no perpetual individual immortality. " Virtue was its own reward, and vice its own punishment. Pleasure was no good, and pain no evil." It is well to note the tenets of these philosophers in connection with Paul's address, to see how he answers them by his positive teaching.

These discussed and argued with Paul in the Market place. **Some said, What will this babbler say?** This " seed-picker," this " picker up of learning's crumbs " as a bird picks up seeds here and there for food. They placed him among " the literary plagiarists who picked up the refuse and scraps of the philosophers, without the knowledge or capacity to apply them correctly."

Shakespeare uses the same figure in *Love's Labor's Lost.*

> "This fellow pecks up wit as pigeons pease,
> And utters it again when Jove doth please.
> He is wit's pedlar and retails his wares
> At wakes and wassails, meetings, markets, fairs."

On the other hand, Bishop Mallalieu thinks that the Athenians were courteous to Paul, and spoke of him as one who was full of seed thoughts, bright sayings, a most interesting conversationalist.

Others said, **He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange**, foreign, **gods**, as Jesus, and " Anastasis " (Gk. for " Resurrection ") " which they regarded as a female deity just as they had altars to Pity, Piety, Modesty." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* This view required that Paul should be brought before the Court of the Areopagus, part of whose duty was to decide as to what gods should be admitted, and what teachings were for the good of Athens.

III. **PAUL'S ADDRESS BEFORE THE AREOPAGUS COUNCIL**, vs. 19–31. **And they . . . brought him unto** the **Areopagus.** The same word is translated " Mars' hill " in v. 22 (Auth. Ver. Am. R. has " Areopagus "). It is most generally thought now that the Areopagus was not the hill but the council which originally had its meetings on the hill, but in Paul's time frequently met in the **stoa Basilica**, the royal portico adjoining the Market place, for the sake of having more room for the audience.

Before this Court had often assembled " the noblest blood of Athens, the first politicians, the first orators, the first philosophers; a court the most august, not only of Athens, but of Greece, and indeed of the whole world." It was at this bar that Socrates was arraigned and condemned, on the ground of his advocating a false religion, and denying the reality of the Athenian gods.

The council consisted of the established lecturers and professors of the university, who tested strange teachers to see whether they should be allowed to compete with the professors who had regular salaries and large fees from their pupils. Besides the members of the university there was a general audience representing public opinion, called the CORONA, from the lesser flames which surround the central glory of the sun. Paul was not brought before this Council as a criminal, but only " in order that the authority might decide whether the preaching and worshipping of these new deities were permissible." — *St. Paul the Orator.*

22. Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, *Ye* men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

24. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

1. *Paul's Courteous Introduction*, vs. 22, 23. **Ye men of Athens**, the usual way of beginning a speech, as frequently by Demosthenes. **I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.** Much better in Am. R., "that ye are very religious." In the comparative degree. Hence, *more full of reverence for deities than the other Greeks, very religious, alluding to the great number of idols in the city*, and to the fact that the two great philosophical sects, Epicureans and Stoics, were deeply concerned with religious questions. The A. V. rendering, "too superstitious," and the English Revision, "somewhat superstitious," are not in accord with either Paul's courtesy, or his skill as an orator, or as a Christian seeking to gain converts.

Mars' Hill in Athens

is the elevation next to the Acropolis on the west. It terminates in a precipice 60 feet high over against the Acropolis. Here, on the summit of the rock, the venerable criminal court of Athens often held its councils, and here it may be that Paul delivered his memorable address to the men of Athens.

23. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions. More clear in the Am. R., "as I passed along," wandering through the city, "and observed the objects of your worship," **I found an altar with this inscription**, *To the Unknown God*. Am. R., "To an Unknown God." There is no article in the Greek, but simply "to unknown God."

Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship. Am. R., "ye worship in ignorance." Better, whom ye worship, *not knowing* his name, and attributes, and nature. There is no reproach implied, as there is in our translation — "ignorantly," or the Am. R., "in ignorance." **Him declare I unto you**, or better as in Am. R., "this set I forth unto you." The very God whom they knew not, the God whose nature is so infinite, whose character is so holy, whose love is so great, that they had no conception of him, and yet had unconsciously longed for because they needed him, this God Paul set forth.

Note. The best missionaries and preachers I know act upon Paul's plan. They do not begin by denouncing, which raises antagonism, but emphasize the better and truer way. It is equally wise for teachers.

2. *Paul Sets forth the True God to the Athenians*, vs. 24, 25. **God that made the world.** The Creator of the world and all that is in it. This fact swept away all their idols and the whole multitude of their gods. Science, by its discoveries, has proved beyond a doubt the unity of God. The question of his unity, so much discussed fifty years ago, is settled forever.

This One God is **Lord** not only of earth but **of heaven.** "All things were made by him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." This sentence shines with wisdom, power, love, goodness, eternal life. How feeble and helpless are idols in this presence. He **dwelleth not in temples made with hands**, as idols are shut in the temples men's hands have built for them. The true God is "infinite eternal, unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, justice, goodness, truth and love."

25. Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;
26. And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;
27. That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

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25. **Neither is worshipped**, better, Am. R., " served," **by men's hands**, as the 3000 idols and statues were made and cared for by the hands of men. " The heathen clothed them with costly garments, overlaid them with silver and gold, carried them in state, installed them at banquets, and brought them costly offerings of food and drink." God can be worshipped only in spirit and in truth, by the service of the heart. He wants not help, but love. For man can give him nothing but what he already has in abundance, except the love and devotion of the heart. That, man can give even to God. For **He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.**

Paul Preaching at Athens. Raphael.

3. *The Brotherhood of Man* was a blow at the state of society in Athens, and their feeling that all less cultured people than they were barbarians. For **God . . . made of one blood all nations of men**, and therefore all are brothers for they are all children of God. (Am. R., " And he made of one every nation of men.")

It is interesting to know that modern science has proved the truth of this statement. The microscope shows that the blood of animals differs and always differs from that of man. But there is no difference in the blood of different races of men. There is nothing in their blood that distinguishes them. But the real unity of the races of man lies in the human soul God the Father has given to them all, who **dwell on all the face of the earth**, wherever God **hath determined the times** (Am. R., " seasons ") **before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.** This is no chance world like that of Hafed's Dream.

"O Golden Day so long desired
Born of a darksome night
The waiting earth at last is fired
By thy resplendent light.

" And hark! like Memnon's morning chord
Is heard from sea to sea
This song: 'ONE MASTER, CHRIST, THE LORD,
AND BRETHREN ALL ARE WE.' "

There is need of this teaching of brotherhood in the most civilized nations to-day.

4. **That they should seek the Lord** (" God," Am. R.). " The whole object of the divine providence, *in his dealings with nations as well as with individuals*, is to bring them to a knowledge of the one true God." — *Lyman Abbott.* God has shown, by sending his Son from heaven, that he has an intense desire that all men should seek him, and find him.

If haply they might feel after him, and, if they feel after him, they will **find him**, in Jesus the Christ. Jesus is the answer to the longings of the soul to find God. Other religions ask questions which Jesus answers.

They express longings and aspirations, while Christ bestows that for which they long. They are the sphinx's riddle, which they cannot solve, and yet not to solve them is death. They are expressions of the religious hunger of men. There are in

28. For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

29. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

30. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

31. Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

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them some faint echoes from God, some dim visions of an answer, but they seem like one great interrogation point written over the whole heart of humanity. They seem to say with Tennyson, —

"I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar stairs,
That slope through darkness up to God;

"I stretch lame hands of faith, and *grope*
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope."

"For what am I?
An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry."

Though he be not far from every one of us.

'Oh, where is the sea?' the fishes cried,
As they swam the crystal clearness through;
'We've heard from of old of the ocean's tide,

"'And we long to look on the waters blue.
The wise ones speak of an infinite sea;
Oh, who can tell us if such there be?'"

God is waiting for us to open the eyes of our souls that we may see and know him.

28. **For in him we live and move and have our being.** Rendall Harris shows that this sentence is quoted by the Greek author, Eumenides, in his poem "Minos." **As certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.** "Said by Aratus of Cilicia, a fellow-countryman of Paul, B.C. 270; Cleanthus, B.C. 300, in a hymn to Jove, and others." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* No honor so great, no blessing so supreme, no hope so glorious, as this that we are the children and heirs of God.

5. *Paul's Applications of these Truths.*

(1) *The Divine Nature.* 29. Therefore **we ought not to think that the Godhead** ("the Divine Nature," R. V. Margin) **is like unto gold**, etc. Idolatry degrades man because it degrades God. That God is a great personal spirit, who has created matter, and still uses it, and that we are his children, made in his likeness, is the grandest conception, both of God and of man, that has ever entered the human mind. Nothing else so ennobles man, so enlarges his spirit, so fills him with aspirations and hopes.

(2) *Repentance.* 30. **The times of this ignorance God winked at**, "overlooked," Am. R., "did not impute to men the errors which they committed in ignorance" (*Cambridge Bible*), but let it go on working out its own futility to satisfy and save men, in distinction from wilful, intentional sin. So Paul says he received mercy for his persecution of Christians because he did it ignorantly in unbelief (1 Tim. 1:13). **But now.** Since Christ has come with new light, new motives, a new message from God. **Commandeth all men every where to repent.** To turn from their sins, and live as children of a holy God should live.

(3) *New Motives.* 31. God **will judge the world in righteousness.** Every decision will be right, correct, loving. God will judge men according to character and life, the test being whether they have done right or wrong; not their wealth or position or rank or genius. The great motives were embodied in Jesus Christ **whom he hath ordained** to be the Saviour of men, the test of obedience, "the way and the truth and the life."

This judgment is made certain because Jesus the Son of God, who died for our sins, God **hath raised from the dead**, and he is now the everliving Saviour.

IV. **THE RESULTS OF PAUL'S WORK IN ATHENS**, vs. 32–34. A summary of immediate results would be small. It is probable that Paul's address was cut short before he finished what he had to say about the Gospel of Jesus. Some of his audience began to mock in derision. They did not wait to hear him out. Paul's address was opposed both to their philosophy and their lives. The easiest way to escape his con-

32. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this *matter*.

33. So Paul departed from among them.

34. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which *was* Dī-ŏ-nȳs'ius the Ar-ĕ-ŏp'-ą-gīte, and a woman named Dăm'-ą-rĭs, and others with them.

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clusions was to sneer at them. They must either repent or turn the edge of his argument. At the same time this kind of answer was a proof that Paul's argument had told upon them. "The seat of the scorner is never a good one for a learner to occupy, who wishes to profit."

Others said, We will hear thee again. Like Felix, they would wait for a more convenient season, but that convenient season was in the Land of Never.

34. **Howbeit.** There was a third but small class, who differed from the others, and **clave unto him, and believed** on Jesus. Two only are named. **Dionysius the Areopagite**, that is, a member of the Council of Areopagus. **A woman named Damaris.** For what she was noted is unknown, but she must have been a woman of distinction and power. A church was founded here later, and the Parthenon became a Christian temple.

Another result was that there has come down the ages a sermon by Paul, "absolutely unique. In the whole of Pauline literature there is nothing to compare with it, so exquisite in its rhetorical style, and so admirable in the profundity of its thought." — *Sabatier*. Of course we have only the barest outline of Paul's address. "The report given in the Acts contains about two hundred and fifty words, and must have lasted little more than two minutes, if that was all St. Paul said." — *Professor Stokes* in *Expositor's Bible*.

The small immediate results are *not* due to the kind of address Paul gave. He was permitted to give but the beginning of his Gospel story. But what he did give was so perfect an introduction to the Gospel, his methods so ideal, so exquisite, that no one can improve on it. I have before me an article in a religious magazine giving "A Possible Re-Construction of the Entire Speech," that would have been a failure if Paul had spoken it.

Whatever failure there was at Athens was due, first to the fact that the audience would not listen to Paul's whole address; second, to the character of the Athenian society, which was too self-complacent, there was not an open door in this University town; third, to the shortness of the time Paul spent at Athens.

LESSON IV. — July 23.

PAUL AT CORINTH. — Acts 18:1–22.

PRINT vs. 1–11. COMMIT vs. 9, 10.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace.* — Acts 18:9.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

It will add interest if the various members of the class impersonate the different persons referred to in the lesson; and come to the class prepared to answer the questions the other scholars may ask them.

For instance, —

A citizen of Corinth. Will you show us around the city, and point out its attractions?

St. Paul. Why did you come here? Why were you discouraged? What did you accomplish? etc.

Silas. Report on the Philippian church (see Philippians).

Timothy. How did you find the Thessalonian Christians? (see Thessalonians).

Aquila. How did you enjoy Paul as a fellow workman?

Priscilla. How were you pleased with Paul in your home?

A leading Jew. Why did you so dislike Paul?

Justus. Why did you give Paul your home to preach in?

Gallio. Why did you care for none of these things? What things?

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 9, 10; 2 Cor. 4:7–9.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Date of arrival at Corinth about Sept. A.D. 51.

Time spent in Corinth, eighteen months, from Sept. 51 to Feb. or Mch. 53, when he left for home. (*Ramsay.*)

Place. — Corinth on the Isthmus that divided Greece. "It was the commercial centre of the Greek world," being on the direct route between Rome and the East.

The second missionary tour, the last period before his return to Antioch.

Missionaries. — Paul, Silas, Timothy.

Church. — "Here was founded one of the largest and most flourishing churches of the first century." Paul wrote two epistles to them.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Corinth as a missionary centre.
Why Paul spent so long a time there.
The difficulties he had to overcome.
His special encouragements.
The need and advantages of Paul's working at his trade.
Governor Gallio's position.
Why the Jews were so often opposed to Paul.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Story of Paul's Adventures and Experiences at Corinth.

I. THE CITY OF CORINTH AS A MISSION FIELD, v. 1.
II. PAUL'S EXPERIENCES WITH THE CORINTHIAN JEWS, vs. 2–8.
III. THE TURNING POINT IN PAUL'S WORK AT CORINTH, v. 9.
IV. PAUL'S EXPERIENCES WITH THE GENTILES AT CORINTH, vs. 9–11. The Vision. The Promise. The Success.
V. PAUL'S ADVENTURES WITH THE MOB, vs. 12–17.
VI. PAUL SAILS FOR HOME, vs. 18–22.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

McGiffert's *Apostolic Age*, pp. 262–273.

Maclaren's *Expositions on Acts*, vol. 2, p. 148.

Gilbert's *Students' Life of Paul*, pp. 130–135.

Ramsay's *St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 255.

On the city of Corinth, see Harper's *Classical Dictionary* and the *Bible Dictionaries*. Lewin's *St. Paul* has fine descriptions and pictures.

On Paul as a tent-maker, see Edersheim's *Jewish Social Life*, chap. II; Peloubet's *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts* (Holman, Phila.).

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Poem, "If the dear Lord should send an Angel down."

Poem, "Labor is rest."

Jacox' *Side Lights on Scripture Texts*, ch. 31, on Gallio.

Geo. Herbert's Hymn, "A servant with this clause."

Stead's *If Christ Came to Chicago*, and *Satan's Invisible World Revealed in New York*, as picture hints of Corinth.

I. **THE CITY OF CORINTH AS A MISSION FIELD**, v. 1. **After these things**, Paul's experiences at Athens, he **departed from Athens**, a very difficult field for missionary work, **and came to Corinth**, also a very difficult field, but with a different kind of obstacles to overcome. It was not a long distance from Athens (55 miles by railroad). His journey by sea would take him about five hours, about 45 miles.

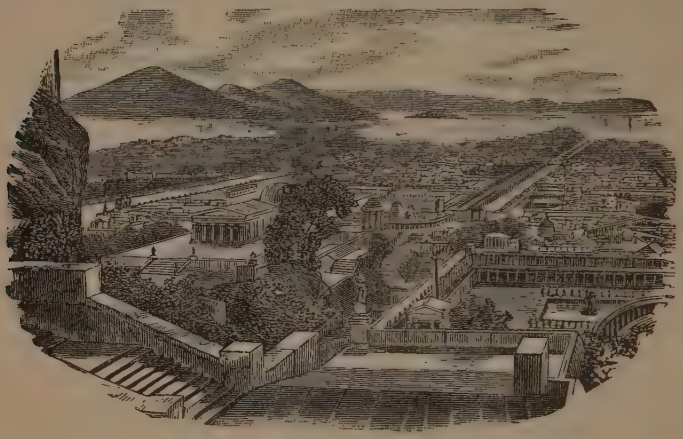
Corinth was the capital of Achaia, the southern province of Greece. It was a beautiful city, delightful for its climate, and above all having the best situation in all Greece for a great commercial city. It was situated on a narrow isthmus with a seaport on either side, one a mile and a half distant on the west toward Rome, and the other at Cenchræa about eight miles to the East.

"This unique geographical situation of the city made it the gateway between Orient and Occident, and through it passed a large part of the trade of the East with the West." — *McGiffert.* Nero made a canal across the isthmus, a miniature Panama Canal. At present there is a fine modern canal. The city has been called "The Star of Hellas," "The Eye of Greece," "The Bridge of the Sea," "The Gate of the Peloponnesus," "The Vanity Fair of the Roman Empire."

The Corinthians were the first to build war galleys, or triremes (Thucydides). The arts of painting and sculpture attained the highest perfection at Corinth; the finest bronze was "Corinthian brass;" our small fruit, the currant, derives its name from Corinth. But "none of her sons are mentioned among the illustrious writers of Greece." It contained a population, according to Farrar, of 400,000.

AFTER these things Paul departed from Ath'ens, and came to Cor'inth;
2. And found a certain Jew named Aq'ui-la, born in Pon'tus, lately come from It'a-ly, with his wife Pris-cil'la; (because that Claud'i-us had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

The Kind of Population to whom Paul was the missionary. It was of the most heterogeneous nature possible; "a population of Greek adventurers and Roman bourgeois, with a tainting infusion of Phœnicians — a mass of Jews, ex-soldiers, philosophers, merchants, sailors, freedmen, slaves, tradespeople, hucksters, and agents of every form of vice — a colony 'without aristocracy, without tradition, without well-established citizens.'" — *Farrar*. The spot where the Isthmian games were held, attracted many strangers, including a multitude of Greeks from every part, to which



Ancient Corinth.

contests Paul refers twice in his letters to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 9 : 24 ; 2 Cor. 2 : 14) and in his other epistles.

The Moral Conditions which Paul had to overcome. "The luxury and licentiousness of the East ran riot in her streets. Corinthian immorality was proverbial the world over." — *McGiffert*. It was the seat of every kind of licentiousness and excess. Vice and profligacy here held high revels, with a shamelessness consecrated by the rites of their false gods. "Its very name had become a synonym for reckless debauchery. . . . East and West mingled their dregs of foulness in the new Gomorrah of classic culture." — *Farrar*. "Suffice it to say that to the temple of Venus were attached more than a thousand courtesans, under the cover of religious rites. . . . Such was the Augean stable which the Christian Hercules now addressed himself to purify." — *Lewin*.

II. **PAUL BEGINS HIS MISSIONARY WORK WITH THE CORINTHIAN JEWS**, vs. 2–8. **HIS METHODS OF WORK**. Paul, as usual, went first to the Jews as fellow countrymen, and as knowing the Scriptures which foretold the coming of Jesus.

First. He Found a Home. He first **found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus** in the northeastern part of Asia Minor. He had been living and doing business in Rome, and apparently he had there been converted to Christianity, — for nothing is said of his conversion at Corinth, — and as a disciple of Jesus, he would naturally be among the very first to become acquainted with Paul, and most ready to welcome him into his home. He with his wife were newcomers to Corinth, being driven from Rome with other Jews by order of the Emperor.

With his wife Priscilla, diminutive of Prisca (Rom. 16 : 3, Am. R.). Since Aquila was called a Jew, but Priscilla is not, it has been inferred that she was a Gentile. As she is usually, by Paul, mentioned first in speaking of the husband and wife, it has been

inferred that she was of higher social rank, better educated and of more marked ability than her husband. But it is worthy of note that both are always mentioned together. He was the business man who by his ability and success made it possible for his wife Priscilla to devote herself to religious work.

It appears that Priscilla was a woman of marked ability, being not only mentioned as sharing the hospitality of the family, but also in the theological instruction of Apollos. "She was a distinguished instance of one of those bright, earnest women whose powers were called into action by the work and teaching of Jesus Christ and his chosen friends, one of the pioneers of that devoted band of women workers who have now for eighteen hundred years done such splendid work for their Lord's cause, in all climes and among all peoples." — *Schaff.*

Paul found Aquila not only a fellow Christian, but a tentmaker as Paul was by trade, and by mutual agreement Paul became a member of his family. A blessed thing for them. A young man in New York City once advertised for a home where his good Christian example would be sufficient compensation for his board. Not a few men would be a blessing in any family even if they kept him as long as Sir Thomas Abney did the poet Isaac Watts, the great hymn writer.

Paul working with Aquila and Priscilla at tentmaking.

Second. He Worked at his Trade and supported himself, as Jesus did for thirty years as a carpenter. "As tents were frequently manufactured from cloth of goats' hair, which was one of the chief products of Paul's native Cilicia, it was natural that he as a boy learned the trade of a tentmaker."— *Bible for Home and School.*

Paul would thus have an opportunity of reaching the people, naturally, as one of them, and to set them an example of doing good work. "I have been wondering," says Eugene Foster in the *Sun. Schl. Times*, "what kind of a tentmaker Paul was. Somehow I feel that if I had been around then, and had wanted a real good tent, one that was made as well as it could be made, I would have tried to get one made by the man Paul. Now why do I say that? I recall something he said which impressed me very much: 'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God' (1 Cor. 10 : 31). If you'll point out a man who has that for his motto, his are the goods I want to buy."

Paul was thus a living sermon. He was very careful to set the Corinthians a good example, and to avoid the impression that his object was to make money out of them. See his words in his letter to them after he had left (1 Cor. 9 : 6–15 and 2 Cor. 11 : 6–10). He showed that men could serve God in honest daily labor. Business is a school in which men are learning God's lessons of truth, honesty, fidelity, patience, or Satan's lessons of dishonesty, deceit, selfishness. The motive to do good, the desire for the glory of God, the service of Jesus Christ, transfigures and transforms daily toil, like the sun shining on the dark fogs and clouds of earth, and making them radiant as the gate of heaven.

"A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room as for thy laws,
Makes *that* and the action fine.

"This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold;
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for less be told."

3. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

4. And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

5. And when Sī'las and Tī-mō'the-ŭs were come from Măç-ę-dō'nĭ-â, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that* Jē'sus *was* Chrīst.

6. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gĕn'tīles.

7. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Justus, *one* that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

Third. He Made the Best Use of the Sabbath, v. 4. **He reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath.** Here he could reach **Jews and Greeks** in a large gathering, as during the week he reasoned and persuaded individuals. Each method has its advantages, but both methods together are necessary for a successful preacher or teacher.

Fourth. His Assistants Arrived to Help Him, v. 5. **Silas and Timothy were come from Macedonia**, Philippi, Thessalonia and Berea. Friends are a wonderful assistance to a lonely worker. One plus two is far more than three. Paul's friendly heart was cheered by their presence. Timothy also brought him glad tidings of the faith and love of these churches and of their longing to see him, so that he was comforted concerning them in all his distress and affliction through their faith. The Philippians also sent him aid, which, like Joseph's wagons to Jacob, brought proof of the abundant harvest of faith and love in the Philippian church.

Fifth. Before their coming Paul was weak and sick and dejected in spirit. See 1 Corinthians 2 : 3, where " weakness " refers to *bodily sickness*. He was with them in *fear and trembling*. In 2 Corinthians 11 : 9 he speaks of having been in *want*. Since they had come, he **was pressed in the Spirit**, not " depressed." And the best Mss read " by the word " instead of " in the spirit ; " so that the *Am. R.* is correct in translating " constrained by the word." " Wholly possessed by, and engrossed in the word." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* " The great champion of the faith, the strong runner of the Christian race," who had been sick and borne down by his burden, perhaps discouraged, now felt the great load of anxiety lifted off from his heart. " The pressure being lifted off " by the coming of his helpers with the good news " spontaneously the old impulse gripped him once more, like a spring which leaps back to its ancient curve when some alien force is taken from it." — *Maclaren.*

Sixth. This Constraining Power aided him to **testify to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ**, their expected Messiah, the salvation of the Jewish nation, as well as of individuals.

The result of this new zeal and enthusiasm, and increase in the number of workers, was to arouse the most strenuous opposition, as it always does. It is a good sign when the enemies of a good cause are awake and active and determined. The enemies care little when a church is inactive, and the friends of a good cause are sleeping.

6. The Jews **opposed themselves** " as an army ranged in hostile array; " **and blasphemed**, uttered railing words and slanders, and false charges, insults and contemptuous scorning of Jesus and his Gospel.

Nothing further could be done with the Jews in their synagogue. So Paul followed Christ's command to his disciples (Matt. 10 : 14) **and shook his raiment**, shook every particle of dust from his garments. " This is constantly done by Orientals. It was a sign that he was relieved of all responsibility for their failure to be saved, and had no share in their character or conduct." **Your blood**, in the sense of death and destruction, **be upon your own heads**. You alone are responsible. This is not a threat, but a warning, a new effort to stop them in their mad career, a last effort to bring them to the way of Salvation. It was Christ's way. His disciples cannot afford to quarrel with opponents, but leaving quarrelsome ones alone, go on preaching the Gospel, and overcoming evil with good. Therefore **from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.**

8. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house: and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

9. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:

Paul's New Quarters.

7. **He departed thence**, from the synagogue as his preaching place. **And entered into a certain man's house**, as the hall for his meetings. **Named Justus** (Am. R., "Titus Justus"). The advantages of this place were (1) that the owner, Justus, was a proselyte, not a born Jew, and it "thus offered easy access to those who wished to come whether Greeks or Hebrews." (2) The place **joined hard to the synagogue**, so that its proximity would make his preaching a standing invitation to the Jews, while, being a Gentile's house, the Gentiles would feel welcome to go there. (3) Justus "was evidently a Roman citizen, one of the coloni in Corinth, and thus St. Paul would gain access through him to the more educated class in the city." Moreover, as a Roman citizen Justus would have greater advantages than the Jews for protecting Paul and the Christian converts.

There is no need to suppose that Paul left his lodgings with Aquila and Priscilla, nor ceased working with him at tentmaking. — (From *Exp. Gk. Test.*, *Ramsay*, etc.)

Results of Paul's Work with the Jews. The most noted convert to Christianity from the Jews was **Crispus, the (chief) ruler of the synagogue**, who with all his household left the synagogue, and joined the new church. He is one of the few converts who were baptized by Paul himself (1 Cor. 1 : 14). "His conversion seems to have been a turning point in Paul's labors at Corinth." **And many of the Corinthians hearing believed.** That is, many of the idolatrous inhabitants of Corinth, in distinction from the Jews and proselytes before alluded to. **And were baptized.** Here, as everywhere, those who became Christians publicly professed their faith in the appointed way. It is a weak faith and feeble love which do not desire to confess Christ before the world.

III. **THE TURNING POINT IN PAUL'S WORK AT CORINTH**, vs. 9. Paul seems to have been discouraged by the small results of his work in Corinth. The obstacles rose like impassable mountains before him. It seemed impossible to make any impression on a city of 400,000 people such as are described above under "Corinth." He was realizing what he later said to the Ephesians: "**We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**" See the picture in Rom. 1 : 18–32.

McGiffert well says: "Never had the gospel been brought face to face with such extreme worldliness; never had it been assigned a more difficult task, than to make its way in such a city, and among such a people. . . . It is no wonder that he approached the city with fear and trembling, as he said later in his letter to them, 'I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling' (1 Cor. 2 : 3). For the Gospel was to be put to a supreme test. If it could make headway in this busy, profligate metropolis, if it could show itself adapted to the needs and equal to the demands of this world in miniature, its power to conquer the world at large would receive such a demonstration as it had never had."

Perhaps one reason why Paul was allowed to be disappointed in having such small success in Athens, was because "our disappointments, our apparent failures, may be the very experiences by which we shall be enabled most to glorify God and bless humanity."

IV. **PAUL'S MISSION TO THE GENTILE CORINTHIANS**, vs. 10–12. *The Vision in the Night.* **Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision.** It is as easy and natural for God to speak to us as it is for us to speak to one another. No one knows in what way this vision came to Paul or how the words were spoken. Not only at his conversion, but on several occasions, God spoke to Paul in visions.

Compare the visions which the apostle John saw when in the midst of persecutions which could be represented only by great earthquakes, the sun darkened, the moon turned into blood, the stars falling from heaven. Then came the vision of Martyrs with crowns, and songs, and visions of the redeemed earth, the perfect success of the cause for which they gave their lives, gave courage and hope and assurance.

Compare also the latest most notable vision or dream, that of Rev. Dr. A. J. Gor-

10. For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.

11. And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

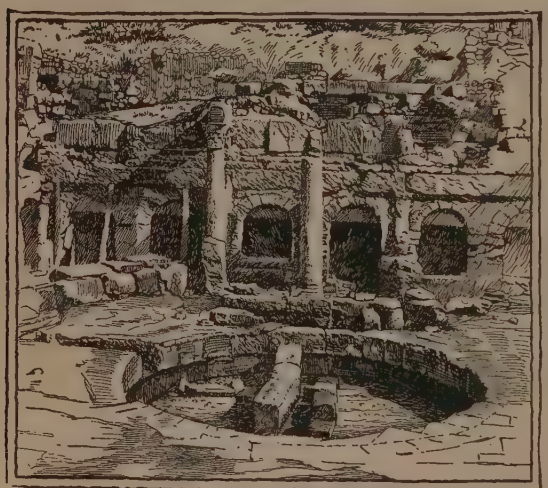
don, for many years the pastor of a flourishing Baptist church in Boston, a vision which changed his life and the life of the church over which he was pastor. See the little volume *How Christ Came to Church* (Baptist Publication Society) or *The Loom of Life* by F. N. Peloubet, or *Select Notes* for 1905, p. 182.

The Lord said to Paul . . . Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace. Keep right on, for you are right, you are doing my work.

10. For I am with thee. "One with God is a majority." So Elisha in Dothan was surrounded by an invisible army of defence.

I have much people in this city. Paul could not be harmed till his work was done. So a great man once said, "I am immortal till my work is finished." "Though now serving at heathen altars, slaves now of the grossest vices, nevertheless they are my people; and here you are to abide, from these vile dust-heaps to gather out my jewels." — *Guthrie.*

"Paul had the pleasure of changing many impure and sinful souls into pure brides, whom he conducted to Christ, and to some of whom he could afterwards say, 'Ye were thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners; but ye are washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God'" (1 Cor. 6 : 9–11).



From a photograph by Dr. Arthur S. Cooley, formerly of the American School at Athens.

The Fountain of Pirene.

Discovered in 1898, by Professor Richardson, director of the American School at Athens, while excavating the site of old Corinth. It was the most celebrated spring in the world, the making of the city of Corinth, and the centre of its life. Pausanias' description is as follows: "The spring is adorned with marble, and there are chambers constructed in the manner of caves, from which the excellent drinking water flows out into an open-air basin." Without doubt, Paul was familiar with this famous fountain.

As a result of this vision, and the words Jesus spoke to Paul, and of his promises, Paul remained a year and a half longer at Corinth teaching the Word of God among them; and founded one of his largest and strongest churches in the midst of this wicked city.

Paul's Fears Changed to Joys. In Arnold's *Light of Asia*, the king dreamed troublous dreams about his son, Prince Siddartha, and seven great and terrible fears came before him in vision. The flag of Indra was rent by a rushing wind, ten huge elephants shook the earth with their tread, a mighty drum pealed like a thunderstorm; his son sat on a tower scattering gems, as if it rained jacinths and rubies, and all the world seized on these treasures. Every one was to the king a great fear. But a wise counsellor showed him that every one of his fears was in reality a great joy. The rent flag was but the beginning of the new. The ten elephants were the ten great gifts of wisdom; the tower was the growing of the true religion, and the gems were the truths his son would give to the world; and the drum was the thunder of the preached word.

Corinthian Evils in our Nation. The same kind of evils that disgraced the city of Corinth still exist in every great city and in the Nation, though they are less intense, and less extensively prevalent. There still exist in our country, — intemperance, crimes, graft, dishonesty, white-slavery, oppression of the poor, and many other

" works of the flesh." It is the business of every patriot, and every Christian to teach and pray and work and live and give to save men from these evils, to convert them to righteousness.

Sometimes it seems impossible to overcome these " principalities and powers of evil," and we are tempted to be discouraged, especially when those who ought to aid, join in opposition, as the Jews opposed Paul. But Christ says to us as he did to Paul, " Be not afraid, but speak, hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, for I have much people in this nation." Let us overcome evil with good, — churches, Sunday schools, reforms, good preaching, and all the thousand ways of helping men from sin, and lifting them up into pure and holy lives.

Corinthian Evils in the Heart, for they are there and our business as individuals is to overcome them, to put on the whole armor of God, be filled with the Spirit of Christ; and gain the victory.

V. **ANOTHER OUTBURST OF THE MOB; LEADING TO THE ROMAN CHARTER OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION**, vs. 12–17. **12. And when Gallio.** The brother of the philosopher and poet, Seneca. He is described as a bright, affectionate, pleasant, popular man, " The Sweet Gallio " or " The Pleasant Gallio." Seneca declares that " those who love him to the utmost, don't love him enough." **Was the deputy**, Am. R., " proconsul," governor. **The Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul**, " made a set assault upon Paul, expressing the culmination of the Jewish hostility." — *Rendall*. They were bound to put a stop to the rapid progress of the Gospel, and therefore brought Paul before the Roman authorities.

The charges brought against Paul related to Jewish customs and laws, and only incidentally touched the Roman law. Governor Gallio, without waiting for Paul's reply, took the accusation out of court, declaring that they had no case. He drew a clearly defined line between illegality against the State, and what was illegal under the Jewish law. " Gallio declared that in any charge of misdemeanor or crime, he was ready to hear evidence, but in a matter of religion or ritual the Roman State would not interfere." — *Ramsay*, who calls this decision " The Charter of Christian Freedom."

" The Jewish rulers had neither moral nor legal right; and Gallio's decision was true to the Roman principles of universal toleration, wherever religion was not made a pretext for sedition, disorder, or debauchery." — *Rendall*.

The decision was important because it showed that freedom of religious speech was granted over the empire, so far as the Roman authorities were concerned. The door was open for Paul to make his way throughout the civilized world.

17. **And Gallio cared for none of these things.** " Gallio has become a proverbial name for one indifferent to religion, but there is nothing in St. Luke's statement to support such a view. All the words show is that Gallio was so little influenced by the accusations of the Jews against Paul that he took no notice of the beating of Sosthenes." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

On the other hand *Rackham* says, " There is a distinction between impartiality and indifference, between judging and *caring*. On the judgment seat sat Gallio, a noble specimen of the Roman aristocracy; at the bar stood Paul, one of the greatest religious teachers of the world, — *and nothing happened* . . . whether we consider his attitude as the outcome of impartiality or indifference, it caused him to lose a great opportunity."

Indifference to Religion, to the Bible, to the church, is a very great misfortune to any person who takes this attitude; it " causes him to lose a great opportunity," his own and the community's.

VI. **PAUL RETURNS HOME TO ANTIOCH AND PALESTINE**, vs. 18–22. **After this Paul tarried there yet a good while.** Whether this period is a part of the year and a half (v. 11) or in addition to it is uncertain. He finally set sail from the east port of Corinth, touched at Ephesus, landed at Cesarea on the coast of Palestine, **went up** to Jerusalem (the phrase *going up* is the usual expression for going to Jerusalem) and having saluted the Church there, **went down** to Antioch, thus completing his second missionary journey.

LESSON V. — July 30.

THE WORD OF THE CROSS. — 1 Cor. 1:1–2:5.

PRINT 1:18–2:2. COMMIT 1:22-24.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.* — GAL. 6:14.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

A widely known Sunday school worker, as reported in the *Sunday School Times*, tells us of being "confronted, one week, with the duty of teaching a certain passage in Ephesians to a class of girls twelve or thirteen years old; and the passage seemed to him hopelessly impossible for their interest. Then he began to use his imagination upon it, in the most deliberate, determined, and persistent way; and before he was through with his preparation the lesson had become, for those girls, one of the most successful he ever taught. For his imagination showed him what was really in that lesson, and had been there all the time; but he could not see it until he used his 'third eye,' that is not fancy, but *sees* what is so, not what isn't so." By this same method we can make this lesson effective. For the cross of Christ is not merely 2000 years ago, but is a part of his very nature, belonging to him as Saviour, Leader and King to-day.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Corinth.
The church at Corinth.
What conditions and questions prompted Paul to write to them?
What is signified by the expression, The cross of Christ?
Why is the cross so essential in the religion of Christ?
What do you understand by Paul's saying that he knew nothing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified?
Christ crucified the power of God.
How could the weak overcome the mighty?

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Paul founded the Church in Corinth about Sept. A.D. 51.

He remained there 18 months, to Feb. or Mch. 53, and closed his second missionary tour there.

The Epistle to the Corinthians was written in A.D. 56, some 4 or 5 years later, at Ephesus, in the early spring. The epistle was written in Greek.

LEARN BY HEART.

John 3:14–16; Isa. 53:4, 5.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Cross is the Wisdom and Power of God, for the Saving of Mankind from Sin and Ruin.

I. PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.
II. PAUL RECOGNIZES MANY GOOD THINGS IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH, 1:1–9.
III. AN ENTREATY AGAINST PARTY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH, 1:10–17.
IV. CHRIST CRUCIFIED THE POWER OF GOD, AND THE WISDOM OF GOD, 1:18–2:5.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Corinthians. Expositor's Greek Test. Cambridge Bible. New Century Bible. Expositor's Bible.

Volumes by *Stanley, Godet, Hodge, Beet.*

The School of Calvary by J. H. Jowett, D.D. is remarkably helpful. *The Way of the Cross*, by C. Armand Miller. Walker's *Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation.*

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

The Cross-Bearer (Twelve ways of bearing the cross, illustrated, *Am. Tract Soc.*). Sidney Lanier's *Poems* "Ballad of Trees and the Master." Keble's *Christian Year*, "Good Friday."

Several of our *Hymns.*

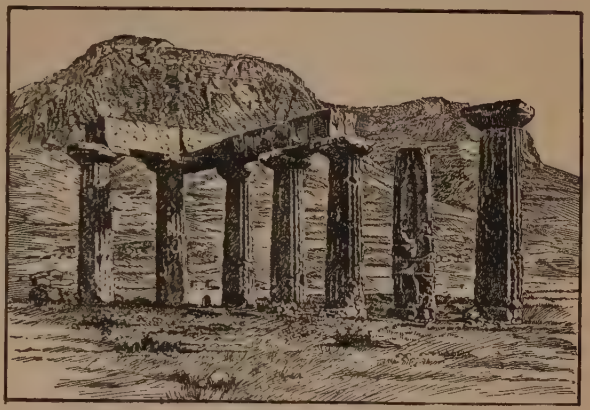
Compare Mrs. Browning's *Poems*, "The Seraphim," where Ador "The Strong" and Zerah "The Bright One," with multitudes of angels, are watching above the cross.

I. **PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.** "The establishment of the church of Corinth was the crowning work of Paul's Second Missionary Journey, and one of the greatest achievements of his life." The work was so difficult, with so

many obstacles in the way. But a vision in the night assured Paul of success and personal safety ; and he determined to make full proof of his ministry.

The Influences amid which the Church Grew up. It was a small community, but a living power, in a worldly city of 400,000 inhabitants and would hardly have been noticed, had it not been for hearts on fire with the Gospel, kindled by the Holy Spirit, with irrepressible earnestness and devotion to the cause of Christ.

But this little church was surrounded with every kind of licentiousness and excess. "They breathed the moral atmosphere of Corinth." "The social festivities of Corinth, bound up as they were with idolatry and its impurities, exposed the church to severe temptations. Their earlier habits and notions had been formed in this environment, so that to conceive and maintain a Christian moral ideal was difficult in the extreme." (From *Exp. Gk. Test.*)



From a photograph.

Corinth.

Ruins of the temple Acroplede or Minerva.

They were like the three heroes Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace, because they would not bow down to his golden image. No power could save them, and enable them to walk in the midst of this seven times heated furnace and receive no hurt, but the presence with them of the Son of God.

Puzzling Questions. Naturally there arose many puzzling practical questions as to what was right, and what was wrong. For instance

1. As to celibacy or marriage, mixed marriages with unbelievers.
2. In public assemblies, — "ought men to cover their heads when they worshipped, after the Jewish custom, or to keep them uncovered, according to the Greek custom."
3. Spiritual gifts, — as to speaking with tongues.
4. Difficulties about the resurrection of the dead.
5. What about different factions in the church ; "I of Paul," "I of Apollos."
6. Their love-feasts, with the rich and the poor.
7. Eating meat offered to idols.
8. Lawsuits before the heathen.
9. The Lord's supper.
10. The bad church member.

The Church of the Mustard Seed. "We often hear the early Church spoken of as though we had nothing to do but to sit at her feet, and learn, and weep because we have fallen so far short of her example. That is the conventional fiction ; very different is the hard reality, as Scripture faithfully reveals it to us. The early church as represented by that at Corinth, was in a worse condition than the worst of our Christian congregations."

"The early Church was the Church of the Mustard Seed ; ours is the Church of the full-grown tree." — *Farrar.* Or rather of "the growing tree," as most of the Churches are not yet full grown.

Writing the Epistle. "Calling Sosthenes to his side as his amanuensis, Paul began to dictate to him this astonishing and eloquent epistle." — *Farrar.*

This Epistle is full of priceless gems. It contains the immortal chapter 13, "the pæan of Christian love, the most glorious even in the writings of St. Paul, the golden perfectness of the whole Christian life" ; and the magnificent chapter 15, the immortal passage on the Resurrection, giving us heavenly light and vision on the Christian's death.

II. **PAUL RECOGNIZES THE MANY GOOD THINGS IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH**, 1 : 1–9. Paul was not blind to the weaknesses and troubles in the Church in Corinth. The need of curing these was a heavy burden on his heart, so great that he wrote to them " with a throbbing heart, and streaming eyes."

But it is well for us, teachers, pastors, reformers, to take note of Paul's method of correcting the imperfections in the church. He does not begin by condemning and pointing out errors and faults. " We do not often draw people close to us by telling them what is wrong with them. Friendship does not thrive on habitual criticism." Paul first recognizes and approves of what is good in them, for in spite of many imperfections, the Corinthian church was very, very far above their surroundings, and what they were before they received the Gospel. After this recognition of the good he can lovingly discuss with them the various things that need to be remedied.

When I have heard ministers, and especially evangelists, begin by denouncing the church for their failures to come up to the Scripture Ideals, I think of the way Jesus dealt with the imperfections of his disciples. It is remarkable how little fault he found with them compared with what he might have done ; how for the most part he overcame evil with good, teaching and training them out of the evil.

Imperfect Instruments. " Does it ever occur to you that the Lord does a good deal of playing on imperfect instruments, such as you and me ? And I don't doubt He often wishes we produced better music than we do. But hard as it is to keep us anywhere nearly at concert pitch, He is patient. So the anthem of the ages swells in spite of the fact that some of us are badly out of tune! " Read Mrs. Gatty's story " Imperfect Instruments " in her *Parables from Nature*, or *Select Notes* for 1897, p. 182.

Note in these verses the expressions Paul uses truthfully in favor of the Corinthian disciples, — " sanctified," " called to be saints," " the grace of God given you," " enriched in utterance and knowledge," " the testimony of Christ confirmed in you," " ye come behind in no gift," " called unto the fellowship of Jesus Christ." How far do these apply to us ?

III. **AN ENTREATY AGAINST PARTY SPIRIT AND FACTIONS**, vs. 10–17. Gently now Paul points out a difference of opinion among them, which might easily divide the church into factions. He beseeches them **by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . that ye be perfectly joined together** (Am. R., " perfected together ") **in the same mind and in the same judgment.** He refers to this unity again in the 12th chapter under the figure of the unity of all the various parts of the human body united into one man.

He learned of these divisions from a woman named Chlō'ē (" Blooming "). It is probable that Chloe was not a member of the Corinthian church, but was a Christian resident of Ephesus, whose servants had visited Corinth and noticed the divisions and reported to her.

The Report. **There are contentions among you.** " Contentions are more than dissensions ; outspoken displays of dissentient opinions." — *New Century Bible.* The form this took is given in ver. 12. **Every one of you saith,** " Each one of you is saying " (instead of all saying the same thing, as Paul besought them, ver. 10). — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

I am of Paul, the founder of the Church, the greatest of their teachers, the wise, loving, powerful but humble leader.

And I of Apollos, the eloquent and genial orator, who " had preached at Corinth in the interval since Paul's first departure, with brilliant effect." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

And I of Cephas, the early name of Peter in the Aramaic language, the one in common use in Palestine. " Conservative Jewish believers, when conflict was afoot, rallied to the name of the preacher at Pentecost and the hero of the Church's earliest victories. Some of them may have been Peter's converts in Judea." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

And I of Christ, the Son of God, the head of the Church Universal, the One by whom alone we can be saved. But all belonged to Christ.

It may well have been a sincere desire to protest against the division of the church into parties with human titles, as in the protest of Paul himself.

Christian Unity. The Christian unity, for which Jesus so earnestly prayed, is absolutely essential to the full success of the church.

1. The only unity either desirable or possible is the kind of unity Christ prayed for, the unity in him, the unity of character, of spirit, of purpose, of love for Christ and his cause, the unity of heaven.

2. It is not a unity of opinion.

It is not a unity of organization. Organizations of those who are seeking the same

18. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

19. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20. Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21. For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

22. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

23. But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24. But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

25. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called:*

27. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28. And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29. That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

31. That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

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purpose, and including only those purposes, are of vast importance and power. But the moment they undertake to force an outward unity, or any unity beyond their own scope and work, the forced unity of organization destroys real unity. The federation of the churches and denominations, working in harmony together to attain the great purposes of Christianity, is the most real unity.

Perhaps the best illustration of church unity is that of our nation, composed of many states, all filled with the national spirit, federated together for certain purposes in which they can best act together, but in most things independent and free. Each state is composed of counties, each county of cities and towns, each of which yields up certain things to the state, but in most things is absolutely free to do as it will. Each city or town has within itself a great number of societies, schools, clubs, families, each of which is perfectly free in its own work, within the limits of its own sphere. It is through this freedom that we gain the greatest unity. Compulsory unity destroys real unity.

IV. **CHRIST CRUCIFIED THE POWER OF GOD AND THE WISDOM OF GOD**, 1:18–2:5. *Am. Revision Changes.* v. 19. **The understanding of the prudent**, Am. R., "the discernment of the discerning." v. 22. **For the Jews require a sign**, Am. R., "seeing that Jews ask for signs." v. 27. **To confound**, Am. R., "to put to shame." v. 30. **Who of God is made unto us wisdom**, Am. R., "who was made unto us wisdom from God." Without taking special note of each of the verses in this section we will direct our attention to the four verses which express its great central theme.

V. **18. For the preaching of the Cross** (Am. R., "the word of the Cross") **is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.**

23. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks (Am. R., 'Gentiles') foolishness;

24. "But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

2 : 2. " For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

The symbol of the cross is a very common sight; we see it on church spires, in books, worn as an ornament. It is sung in our churches. But what is needed in our teaching is to bring out its meaning so that the great truth which it symbolizes shall be real to our scholars and a living power in their lives.

Taking the Bible as a whole we see in it God's plan and purpose and goal for mankind, as expressed in the last chapters of Revelation and in the prayer that is offered more frequently than any other, " Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

The Problem was by what means this purpose could be accomplished. The whole Old Testament is the story of divine work for this end.

Then at the one best time in all history came a new method, — the coming of Jesus the Son of God into the world, his heavenly life in the world, his death on the cross, and his Resurrection. These are all bound together in one, summed up in the Cross, as the Power and the Wisdom of God for Salvation.

The world to-day is the proof of this power and wisdom of God.

No other religion had such a conception.

It is the Central Event of the Moral history of the world.

The most powerful Motives in existence, that can move men to do right, and obey God, and lift them out of sin into the kingdom of heaven, are those that flow from the cross of Christ.

First. The sacrifice on the cross is the highest proof and the strongest expression of the love of God to man. Christ proved the greatness of his love by what he was willing to suffer for those he loved. Ruskin says that " the fountain in which sins are indeed washed away is that of love, not of agony." But the agony was the measure and the proof of love. It declares God's love to man " in letters that can be read from the stars." There can be no greater expression of the love of God for us than the coming of his Son from heaven, and living the heavenly life on earth, and giving his life to save us.

Dr. J. H. Jowett, the famous preacher, writes, " I sometimes take down from my bookshelves a little book of devotion written by a great Mystic 300 years ago, and read its quaint and engaging title : *Calvary is the True Academy of Love.* If I want a school where love is taught and revealed I must seek the Academy of Calvary." To do wrong, to go on in sin, requires us to go against the mightiest Love in the Universe.

Second. On the cross was made the atonement for sin through which God might " be just [righteous] and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus " (Rom. 3 : 26). It made it possible for God to forgive sins, offer forgiveness freely to all who repent, and, at the same time, honor his law, keep up the standard of righteousness, make the world more righteous, and men more careful to keep the law than if the sin had been punished.

"Is it not strange, the darkest hour
That ever dawned on sinful earth,
Should touch the heart with softer power,
For comfort, than an angel's mirth?
That to the Cross the mourner's eye should turn,
Sooner than where the stars of Bethlehem burn?"

Third. It shows to us clearly the terrible evil of sin that demands such a sacrifice in order to be saved from it. We ought to put forth every effort, and endure every cost that we may be delivered from its power.

Fourth. It shows us that God wants us to come and be saved, that there is joy in heaven over every sinner that repenteth.

In the National Gallery at London is an impressive picture, by Correggio, representing the bleeding, thorn-crowned Sufferer. The rope which binds the hands of the Divine Victim is represented as depending over the Latin inscription, —

"Ego, pro te, hæc passus sum;
Tu vero quid fecisti pro me?"

"I have borne these things for thee
What hast thou done for me?"

Correggio, National Gallery, London.

"Ecce Homo." "Behold the Man."

Pilate stands in the doorway. Mary the mother and probably Mary Magdalene in the foreground.

Fifth. It expresses the supreme value of conscience and right and duty, in that Jesus did what was right at every cost. Sometimes we recoil from the thought of the blood of Christ so often referred to in the Bible, — there are those who would keep these things from their children, — yet we do not shrink from it in other things. We read even to children the story of the giant-killer. The fact is that there is no other way to express in language that all can understand, the highest degrees of heroism, courage, self-sacrifice, and love. It is these qualities we see rather than the agony.

Sixth. It shows the value of our souls, as worth saving at such a price.

Seventh. From the cross came the resurrection and the everliving Saviour ; and the fulness of the gift of the Holy Spirit, renewing the soul, inspiring life, transforming the spirit.

Thus all powers and all motives that can touch the heart of man to lift him out of sin into the kingdom of heaven radiate from the cross.

LESSON VI. — August 6.

THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD. — 1 Cor. 13.

APPLICATIONS TO TEMPERANCE.

COMMIT vs. 4–7.

GOLDEN TEXT. — ***Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.*** — 1 Cor. 13:13.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

This lesson is concerned with one of the most fundamental principles underlying the progress of mankind. It is expressed with such marvellous beauty and power, it so touches with heavenly light every part of our daily life, that every one should learn it by heart. One of its many applications to daily life is to the overcoming of the Evils of Intemperance, for accomplishing which victory this divine love is the mightiest force.

LEARN BY HEART.

The whole chapter.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

The same as Lesson 5.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The Commentaries on Corinthians. Professor Henry Drummond's, *The*

Greatest Thing in the World stands an easy first on this chapter.

The School of Calvary, by Dr. Jowett. First chapter.

Sir Wm. Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church*, "A Hymn of Love Divine," and "Self Denial the Proof of Love."

President Mark Hopkin's *Law as Love, and Love as Law.*

Henry Clay Trumbull's *The Ten Commandments as a Covenant of Love.*

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Why do the R. V.'s change "Charity" to "Love"?
Why are real outward virtues of no value as virtues, without Love?
How does Love transform them?
By what means does Paul show what Love is?
The eight things that Love does not do.
The eight things which are fruits of Love, and its test.
What three things pass away, and why?
Is Love a growing virtue? (v. 11).
The three abiding, eternal virtues; and why.
Why is Love the greatest of all?

RECENT TEMPERANCE LITERATURE.

The Scientific Temperance Journal. Excellent. 36 Bromfield St., Boston, Mass. $1.00 a year.

John Barleycorn, by Jack London. (Century Co. Price, $1.00.)

The gifted pen of Jack London with a few swift strokes has laid bare the "cause" of alcoholism, for which many scientific scalpels are still laboriously probing.

On the Firing Line, by Jenkin Lloyd Jones. (Chicago: Unity Publishing Co. Price, 50 cents.)

Alcohol and the Human Body, by Horsley and Sturge. ($.50.)

Social Welfare and the Liquor Problem, by Harry S. Warner. ($1.10.)

The Anti-Alcohol Movement in Europe, by Ernest Gordon. ($1.65.)

These books, with posters and stereopticon slides, can be obtained from Journal referred to above.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Greatest Thing in the World; and What it can do for Temperance.

I. The Greatest Gifts are Failures unless Filled with the Spirit of Love, vs. 1–3.
II. Christian Love is Known by the Qualities it Manifests in Daily Life, vs. 4–7.
III. Love Never Faileth, vs. 8–12.
IV. The Immortal Three, v. 13. Applications to Temperance.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

In the preceding chapter, which is very closely related to chapter 13, Paul has been showing the great variety of gifts the Holy Spirit had bestowed upon the Corinthian church, which, like our bodies, consists of many members, but one body filled with one spirit. Some were gifted with wisdom, others with knowledge; there were apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles; others were gifted with power to heal, to speak with tongues, with special faith. Then he urges them **to covet earnestly the best gifts**, — those which are best adapted to their talents, those which fit them to do the most good, and accomplish most for the Kingdom of God.

And yet show I you a more excellent way, the way of Love.

I. **ALL THESE VIRTUES AND GIFTS ARE FAILURES UNLESS THEY ARE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT OF LOVE**, vs. 1–3. Just as the body is dead unless a living soul abides in it and inspires it.

Note that "in praising Love, Paul does not fall into the error of criticising others; he does not even criticise his pupils. He does not suggest that the Corinthians lack the great quality. He suggests only that he himself may be wanting in it. All hint of possible fault is put in the first person singular. This is one of the beautiful things in this most comprehensively beautiful and harmonious 'Hymn of Heavenly Love.'" — *Ramsay.* "The Corinthians were eagerly desirous to attain excellence, to be pre-eminent in good and brilliant qualities, to be wise and philosophical, to understand the world in which they lived and to improve and correct their neighbors and society; to be prophets and teachers admired and respected of all men." Therefore Paul takes up these gifts and shows that they are vain unless prompted by the motive of Love, — even **though** ("if," Am. R.) I, your apostle and teacher, **speak with the tongues of men and of angels**, with supreme eloquence, even like the "still small voice" on Horeb that "rose so sweetly on the ear that all in heaven and earth might hear"; **and have not charity** (Am. R., "Love," is much better), **I am become (as) sounding**

2. And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3. And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

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brass, or a tinkling (Am. R., " clanging ") **cymbal** ; mere noise, mere sounds, no music, no power to accomplish the object which real eloquence seeks to gain.

On the other hand, if love pervades and inspires the gift, eloquence is one of the most powerful instruments in persuading men to repent, in moving men toward righteousness, in portraying the blessedness of serving Christ. Despise not these gifts, but transform and give them power as the instruments of love. Then they are sweet as the music of the angel choirs.

2. Again **prophecy** and power to **understand** (" know," Am. R.) **all mysteries**, and **all knowledge**, and **all faith so that I could remove mountains**, — these powers were sought by the Corinthian Church leaders, and rightly if they were prompted and inspired by Love ; but without Love, these gifts accomplished nothing. **I** with all these gifts, **am nothing**, an utter failure for the purpose for which the gifts were bestowed. But faith, with love, used for Christ and his kingdom can remove mountains that stand in the way of the coming of the kingdom.

3. **And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor**. As the Pharisees gave alms, and Ananias sold his property, from unworthy motives, without love ; while Barnabas and many others sold theirs from love, and Jesus bade the rich young man do the same, as an expression of love and faith.

Thus we are to understand Christ's picture of the judgment in Matt. 25 : 31–46, that the good deeds which are a condition of eternal life proceed from a heart filled with the love of God and the love of man. Otherwise **it profiteth me nothing**. There is no virtue in it. " It is an investment," not a gift from the heart. Such gifts will not continue long, or come into their fulness without love. But if there is love these are sure to be the fruit.

And though I give my body to be burned. From unworthy motives, from pride, from a desire for honor or glory, or a high place in heaven; as Empedocles the Greek philosopher of great wealth, eloquence and knowledge, threw himself into the crater of Etna, in order, from his sudden disappearance, the people might believe him to be a god.

There are persecuted upon whom Jesus pronounces his highest blessings (Matt. 5: 10–12), but they are persecuted " for righteousness' sake." There are martyrdoms, of whose victims for Christ's sake it is said in Revelation, " Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." Yet even of these things, when done without love, it must be said, **it profiteth me nothing**. There is no virtue in it to be rewarded. It does not improve the character nor aid the cause.

All the above gifts are what we *have*. Love is what we *are*. Who would accept any acts of homage, or words of love, if he knew that they were empty forms, with no spirit of love in them.

APPLICATION TO TEMPERANCE. The principle stated in these three verses has its applications to those who are warring against the immense evils of Intemperance. They need all the great gifts God vouchsafed to the Corinthian Church, — the gift of tongues, even of angels' persuasiveness, the prophetic vision of ideals, the power to understand the mysteries of dealing with their problems, accurate knowledge, faith that can remove mountains, generous giving, and the martyr spirit. All these must be pervaded with the spirit of love to God and to man. Professor Ramsay well writes this description of the love needed : " Love is the quality which Jesus meant, when he gave the order to love thy neighbor as thyself : it embraces the most comprehensive and strongest kind of good-will to all men, a deep and burning desire to seek after the progress of the race and the improvement and benefit of every individual with whom we are brought into relations; it is entirely unselfish; it develops the side of our own nature in which we can approximate nearest to the Divine nature, for it is the human counterpart of the feeling that God entertains to man."

No dealers in intoxicating liquors can have this divine love.

II. **CHRISTIAN LOVE IS KNOWN BY THE QUALITIES IT MANIFESTS IN DAILY LIFE**, vs. 4–7. Having learned the absolute necessity of Love, our next duty is to learn what Love is, how we can recognize it. There is no exact definition of

4. Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Love, any more than there is of life. We know it by what *it does*, by the fruits it bears, that grow on this Tree of Life. "Here we see the nature and working of the indispensable Love, . . . the mirror of what we ought to be.

"The *behaviour* of Love is delineated in fifteen exquisite aphorisms." Notice that they have common names; that they are virtues which we hear about every day; that they are things which can be practised by every man in every place in life; and how by a multitude of small things and ordinary virtues, the supreme thing, the *summum bonum*, is made up.

"As every lovely hue is light,
So every grace is love."

1. **Love suffereth long.** Is patient with the faults and provocations of others, patient with the slow development of those we seek to make better with a patience that works on, never "weary of well doing." Love is no meteor emotion, but a fixed star; not a flash of lightning, but the sun shining regularly year in and year out "on the evil and on the good."

2. **And is kind.** Kindness is love in action, love at work. "It is the amiable side of goodness." "Active in doing as many kind things as possible to as many people as possible." "Have you ever noticed how much of Christ's life was spent in doing kind things?"

3. **Love envieth not.** Envy grows out of selfishness, the very opposite of love. It is one of the meanest of sins.

"Base envy withers at another's joy,
And hates that excellence it cannot reach."

"Can I be stem, and another be wheat?
Can I be shell, and another be meat?
Another be head, while I am feet?
If God will."

4. **Love vaunteth not itself.** Is not boastful, proclaiming its good deeds from the housetops. It seeks to do good, not to build monuments for itself.

5. **Is not puffed up** with self-conceit, like a soap bubble, large in size, shining outside, but mostly wind. The word refers to the inward disposition expressed outwardly by vaunting one's self.

6. **Doth not behave itself unseemly.** "Without delicacy of feeling." Almost all unseemly conduct flows from pride, self-conceit or selfishness. Love is the fountain of courtesy, and one who is seeking to do good to others seldom fails in true politeness.

"The word 'gentleman' means a gentle man — a man who does things gently with love."

7. **Seeketh not her own.** Is not selfish, looking out for self first of all. Love is ever seeking how to help others, and forgetting self labors for the good of others, — individuals, communities, the nation, the world.

8. **Is not easily provoked.** (Am. R. omits "easily" as giving a false coloring.) Love is good tempered; it does not lose its temper, is not irritable, not provoked to anger. To lose control of one's temper is a great and dangerous evil. The evil is not in the temper, which is a necessary element in character, but in the failure to control it. There are times when the feeling of indignation should flame like a blazing volcano against the wrongs that are done to others, and urge us on to work against them.

9. **Thinketh no evil** (Am. R., "taketh not account of evil"), does not put it down on its books of account, is not suspicious, is not always looking for faults in others, nor attributing evil motives to them. "Faults are thick where love is thin." Love puts the best construction on the acts of others, and makes all possible allowances.

10. **Rejoiceth not in iniquity.** "In-equity," "unrighteousness," as in Am. R., moral evil of all kinds. Is not glad when others sin, hates to report the weaknesses and faults of others, refuses to seem good by depreciating others.

11. **But rejoiceth in** (or with) **the truth**, is in sympathy with all that is true, rejoiceth whenever it can find a virtue or good deed in others, "rejoices only when the right cause triumphs, whether or not itself is the gainer by the triumph."

7. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8. Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

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12. **Beareth all things**, endures all hardships, reproaches, opposition, trials that assail us in working for the kingdom of heaven.

13. **Believeth all things**, " not with credulity, but with the general determination to put on a neighbor's words and actions the best construction possible " ; has faith in the final outcome of every good cause, in God's promises and love and truth, in the victory of good over evil, in the certainty of the triumph of the Kingdom of God.

14. **Hopeth all things**, is not discouraged however dark the future may seem. Hope is the radiance, the outshining, of faith. We believe the sun will rise ; hope is the morning star, the glory of the dawning rays on the clouds. " Hope is nourished by endurance."

15. **Endureth all things**. " The active patience of the stout-hearted soldier." It goes on bearing, believing, hoping to the end. No obstacles can stop it. It knows nothing of despair.

> "Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul;
> Love is the only angel who can bid the gates unroll;
> And when he comes to call thee, arise and follow fast;
> His way may lie through darkness, but it leads to light at last." — *Van Dyke.*

APPLICATIONS TO TEMPERANCE. Each of these characteristics of Love applies to the carrying on of the Temperance Reformation. Take them one by one in the class, and show the scholars, or better let them point out the direction in which they aid the cause of this as well as other reforms. For instance, if we love those whom we wish to help, and if we love the other workers, and love the Cause, we will show patience, and kindness, and unselfishness. We will not be conceited ; we will be courteous, we will rejoice in the truth ; we will not misjudge others ; we will go on even against great opposition ; we will believe in the Cause and its success ; we will hold to eternal hope; we will endure to the end, the final triumph of the Cause, no matter what difficulties nor how long the battle.

III. **LOVE NEVER FAILETH**, vs. 8–12. The Greek work for " faileth " denotes failing in the sense of cessation, " dropping out of existence." " Love is contrasted with the three typical forms of Christian expression, the partial being superseded by the perfect." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

Prophecies, not the things prophesied, but the gift of prophesying, which at the best can only partly express God's words, — these **shall fail** (" be done away," Am. R.) in the fuller vision, and wider knowledge that is coming.

Tongues, they shall cease. The time will come when they will not be needed as a sign nor to enable us to express every varied emotion.

Knowledge, it shall vanish away (" be done away," Am. R.) in the fuller knowledge of the eternal world, as the light of the stars vanishes away when the sun has risen.

9, 10. For we know in part. Here we have the reason why knowledge and prophecy were to cease. The stress is on these words " *in part*." " Only *partial* glimpses of the truth are revealed in prophecy ; only *partial* glimpses of the truth are received in the intuitions of knowledge." — *Stanley.* **When that which is perfect is come**, etc., all the fragments will be seen to be only like the separate stones carved in the quarry, which can be fully understood only when the whole building stands before us complete.

11. **When I was a child . . . I understood** (Am. R., " I felt ") **as a child**, etc. Paul here gives us an illustration of the above truth from the familiar experience of every grown person.

12. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

12. In this verse Paul gives us another kind of illustration of the above truth. **For now**, in this present life, **we see through a glass** (Am. R., "as in a mirror"). At that time the best mirrors, of polished brass, were made in Corinth, about the size of our hand mirrors. They were of course imperfect and dim compared with our looking glasses, and more or less distorting. The Greek word for "through" the mirror was "in allusion to the appearance of the imaged object as *behind* the reflector." **Darkly**, "as an enigma." There must have been guessing and undefined vision in the reflections from such a surface.

Roman Mirrors.
Made of polished metal.

But then face to face, clearly, perfectly, seeing each object as it really was. Many of our words which express spiritual truths are metaphors or illustrations from physical facts; as, *Spirit* and *spiritual*, from the wind, breath. *Now* we see spiritual things through these enigmas; then by direct intuition, the veil of metaphor, of the flesh, being taken away. **Then shall I know even as also I am known**, *i.e.* perfectly. (Am. R. reads, "Then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known.") All the mysteries of God's providence to us, all the mysteries of His Word, of sin and redemption, pain, election, life, God; are solved as soon as we see things in all their relations and in the light of heaven.

Love is a Growth. "The business of our lives is to have the virtues above described fitted into our characters. That is the supreme work to which we need to address ourselves in this world, to learn Love. Is not life full of opportunities for learning Love? Every man and woman, every day has a thousand of them. The world is not a playground; it is a schoolroom. Life is not a holiday, but an education. And the one eternal lesson for us all is *how better we can love.* What makes a man a good artist, a good musician, a good stenographer? Practice. What makes a man a good man? Practice. Nothing else. If a man does not exercise his soul, he acquires no muscle in his soul, no strength of character, no vigor of moral fibre. Love is a rich, strong, manly, vigorous expression of the whole round Christian character, the Christ-like Nature in its fullest development. And the constituents of this great character are only to be built up by ceaseless Practice." — Professor Drummond's *The Greatest Thing in the World.*

The Christian Graces. Geo. E. Hicks.

"Calvary is the greatest school of Love," where we learn how to practise love in daily life.

IV. **THE IMMORTAL THREE**, v. 13. **And now**, in conclusion, **abideth faith, hope, charity.** These three graces — faith, hope, love — remain imperishable and immortal. We shall never cease to trust in God, for our souls can no

more live in heaven than they can here, without divine help and influence which come from trusting him as Governor, Helper, and Friend. Faith will only be stronger, more complete, in heaven than here. *Hope*, too, will abide, because there will always be more to follow, more to expect. And all that has been received in the past, all its wonderful unfoldings of truth and joy, will give ground for larger and purer hope through eternal ages.

Definitions by Dr. J. H. Jowett of Fifth Ave. Presbyterian Church, New York City.

"Belief," he says, "is acceptance of a map. Faith is taking the voyage."

Of Faith, Hope and Love he gives these suggestive definitions:

"Hope contemplates a possibility; Faith converts the possibility into actuality; Love is the resulting disposition. Hope is a fountain; Faith draws the water and drinks; Love distributes the water to others."

And here is a wonderful definition of Grace:

"Grace is the Divine energy of holiness issuing in the ministry of love in quest of the unlovely, and by the communicating of itself converting the unlovely into the lovely."

But the Greatest of these is Love. (1) It is greatest in its nature, noblest, deepest, happiest, most pervasive, most heavenly. (2) It brings us closest to God, makes us partakers of his nature, his children and heirs. (3) It is the one thing without which faith and hope are of little avail. (4) It is the most powerful, exerts the widest influence for good, is the strongest motive for the upbuilding of character. (5) It is universal. Every person, of every degree, may have this love. More than all other things together, it makes those that have it "free and equal." (6) With faith and hope, love is eternal. The longer one lives, the more love he can have. It will expand and grow forever and ever, in increasing blessedness and glory. (7) It is the greatest because God is Love, and has expressed that infinite Love in sending his only begotten Son, full of grace and truth, to dwell among us that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

THE LARGER PRAYER

"At first I prayed for *Light;*
Could I but see my way,
How gladly, swiftly would I walk
To everlasting day!

"And next I prayed for *Strength,*
That I might tread the road,
With firm, unfaltering feet and win
The Heavens' serene abode!

"And then I asked for *Faith;*
Could I but trust my God,
I'd live enfolded in His peace
Though foes were all abroad!

"But now I pray for *Love;*
Deep love to God and man —
A living love that will not fear
However dark His plan!

"And Light and Strength and Faith
Are opening everywhere!
God only waited for me till
I prayed the *larger prayer!*"

APPLICATION TO TEMPERANCE. Whoever feels the impulses of the divine love of which we have been studying, seeks most earnestly to rescue the young from the snares of intemperance, by every power within our reach. And also to inspire the young with the desire to help one another in this cause.

LESSON VII. — August 13.

THE GRACE OF GIVING. — 2 Cor. 9.

COMMIT vs. 10, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.* — ACTS 20:35.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Some excellent remarks about Day Schools, by Anna Bradford Hibbard in the *Congregationalist* apply equally well to the Sunday School.

"The first step in helping in the school life of any child is to establish the very friendliest relation possible between the home and the school —between us and our children on one hand, and the teachers and schoolmates on the other. If from

the very beginning children are led to feel that school will be a pleasant place, but that the school work is as serious a matter to the boy and girl as Father's business is to him and Mother's home work is to her, there will be few undesirable marks for 'Deportment' on report cards.

"Let us take the initiative in getting acquainted with the teacher. We can drop in on her at any time. She may not be able to go to so many homes.

"What shall be the attitude of the home towards lessons? Shall we leave it all to the teacher, or shall we lend a helping hand with the lessons, too? How much ought the children to study at home?"

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 6, 7; Luke 6 : 38; Acts 20 : 35.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The Second Epistle to the Corinthians was written late in A.D. 56, or early in 57 (some place it a year later).

Place. — Probably from Philippi in Macedonia, on Paul's homeward way to Jerusalem, at the close of his Third Missionary Journey.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The Corinthians giving to the Jerusalem church.
The influence of example.
Sowing and reaping.
Why it is more blessed to give than to receive.
Why God loves a cheerful giver.
The Tenth Legion.
The word "Grace," used 8 times in chs. 8 and 9.
The effect of generous giving on our character.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: St. Paul on the Privilege of Giving.

The Collection for the Poor Christians at Jerusalem. Given by the Gentile Christians.

I. Sowing and Reaping, 2 Cor. 9 : 6.
II. God Loveth a Cheerful Giver, 2 Cor. 9 : 7.
III. Systematic Giving. Weekly Offerings, 1 Cor. 16 : 2.
IV. More Blessed to Give than to Receive, Acts 20 : 35.
V. The Riches of their Liberality, 2 Cor. 8 : 2.
VI. Large Gifts.
VII. They first Gave their own Selves, 2 Cor. 8 : 5.
VIII. The Measure of the Giving.
IX. Training the Sunday School to Give.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Corinthians.
Farrar's *Messages of the Books.*
The Tenth Legion, by Amos R. Wells (2 cents, Christian Endeavor, Tremont Temple, Boston). *The Sacred Tenth, or Studies in Tithegiving, Ancient and Modern*, by Henry Lansdell.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Henry Van Dyke's *The Mansion.*
Legend of St. Thomas, in Mrs. Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art.*
The Deacon's Week, a booklet by Rose Terry Cook. *Thanksgiving An'*, a capital story in tract form, on systematic giving.

PAUL'S COLLECTION FOR THE POOR CHRISTIANS AT JERUSALEM, vs. 1–5. One of the greatest dangers assailing the Christian Church was that of a division between the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians, into two irreconcilable parties. When Paul came to Jerusalem after working several years among the Gentiles, and had made many converts and founded quite a number of Churches in Asia Minor and Macedonia and Greece in Europe, the leaders of the Jerusalem Church, James, Peter and John, agreed that Paul's work among the Gentiles was the Lord's work, and that the Jewish Christians might continue to keep the Jewish law, but that their ceremonial customs and laws were not binding on Gentile Christians.

These leaders also suggested that the Gentiles could aid in binding the two parties in a closer union by remembering the poor Jewish Christians, by sending them a contribution of money to show their good will, which Paul gladly favored. For the Gentile Christians were living in rich, active, commercial centres, and while few were of the wealthy class, all had greater opportunities for gaining a living than the Jews in Jerusalem.

But there was still a party of intensely active and zealous Jewish Christians who insisted that every Gentile Christian must submit to the ceremonial law divinely imposed on the Jewish nation to prevent its amalgamation with the heathen all through their history.

On the other hand the Gentile Christians could not see the necessity of the Jewish

For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2. For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3. Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

4. Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5. Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as *a matter of* bounty, and not as *of* covetousness.

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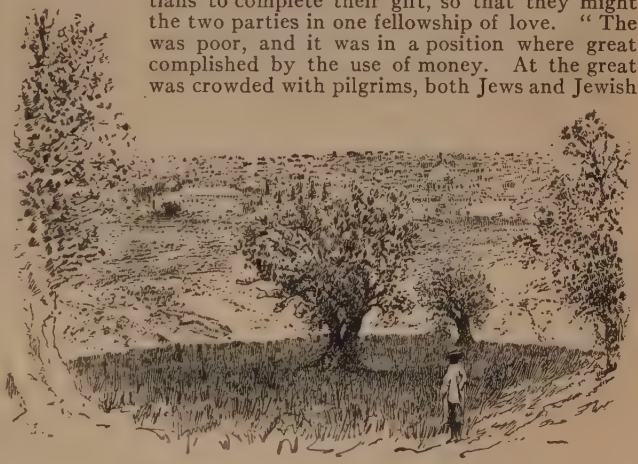
ceremonial in their case, and Paul agreed with them. They refused to bear this unnecessary yoke, and be under such bondage. There was no such yoke imposed upon them by the teachings of Jesus Christ.

For months, and even years, those churches had been gathering funds under his directions through weekly contributions, and now in this Epistle he is urging the Corinthian Christians to complete their gift, so that they might help him to unite the two parties in one fellowship of love. "The church in Jerusalem was poor, and it was in a position where great service could be accomplished by the use of money. At the great feasts Jerusalem was crowded with pilgrims, both Jews and Jewish Christians; and there was opportunity for beneficent action and hospitality on those occasions. The pilgrims were often poor: fatigue must have fostered diseases in the crowded city: food was dear, when demand was great and supply limited. Generous charity on the part of the church in Jerusalem was not merely right and Christian: it was also wise and prudent, for it was effective in spreading the knowledge of the truth and in conciliating the goodwill of the Jewish strangers who found help and kindness from the church in their need. Now this was a work in which money could be most effectively employed. Such a plan shows true statesmanship and constructive genius, building up the fabric of a great united church, whose head should be in Jerusalem, its members scattered over the whole Roman Empire." — *Ramsay.*



General View of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives.

Note how skilfully Paul appeals to the Corinthians. He recognizes their **forwardness of mind** (Am. R., "readiness") in entering upon the collection, **a year ago**, so that he made their generosity known (Am. R., "I glory on your behalf") to the Christians in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, cities **of Macedonia** where he had founded churches (Corinth was in **Achaia**, southern Greece); and the Corinthian **zeal hath provoked** (Am. R., "stirred up") **very many.**

Paul then urges them to complete their collection (1) lest he **should be ashamed in this same confident boasting** (Am. R., "put to shame in this confidence"), for it would react on the usefulness and influence of the Corinthian church; and (2) it would mis-

6. But this *I say*, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give;* not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

interpret the spirit in which the money was given, which was **a matter of bounty**, free, generous, abundant giving; **and not as of covetousness** (Am. R., "extortion"), forced, compelled by outward authority against their will.

Street Scene, Jerusalem.

Instead of taking up this chapter verse by verse, we will consider the subject of Giving in its different phases chiefly according to Paul's persuasive sentences in reference to the contribution he was urging.

I. **SOWING AND REAPING**, v. 6. "**He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.**" The Greek words for "bountifully" are a preposition "for" followed by a plural noun, "blessings," many in number and great in variety.

There are two universal laws of sowing and reaping, both of which apply to giving in benevolence.

The First Law is that we must reap according to the seed we sow. As Christ said that if we sow thorns we cannot gather grapes; if we sow thistles, we cannot reap a harvest of figs. This is as true of the spiritual sowing and reaping, as it is in the natural world.

The Second Law is that we reap in proportion to the quality and amount of the seed sown, only the harvest is far more abundant than the seed. A single grain of corn sown in fitting soil may yield a harvest of hundreds of such grains.

Illustration. Laying up Treasures in Heaven. "A rich lady dreamed that she went to heaven and there saw a mansion being built. 'Whom is that for?' she asked of the guide.

"'For your gardener.'

"'But he lives in the tiniest cottage on earth with barely room enough for his family. He might live better if he did not give away so much to the miserable poor folks.'

"Further on she saw a tiny cottage being built. 'And whom is that for?' she asked.

"'That is for you.'

"'But I have lived in a mansion on earth. I would not know how to live in a cottage.'

"The words she heard in reply were full of meaning. 'The Master Builder is doing his best with the material that is being sent up.'

"Then she awoke resolving to lay up treasure in heaven."

Henry Van Dyke's recent beautiful story *The Mansion* gives us a similar vision, in fuller and more interesting form.

"*The Law of the Harvest* is to reap more than you sow:

"Sow a thought, and you reap an Act
Sow an act, and you reap a Habit;
Sow a habit, and you reap a Character;
Sow a character, and you reap a Destiny."

—*C. D. Boardman* (1801–1831), a Missionary.

Hence the value of the habit of giving. Children can usually give little money, but they can give something, helpful deeds, kind words, comfort to the neglected. The

8. And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work:

9. As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower, both minister bread for *your* food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;

11. Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

Boy Scouts are expected to do something every day for some one, without any reward. They will reap a nobler character, a higher usefulness all their lives.

Illustration. Giving away Flowers. "'I don't see how foreign missions help the home churches,' said Lou Baker, looking up at her mother. 'The preacher said they did, yesterday, when he was preaching about missions, you know.'

"'Do you remember the beautiful beds of nasturtiums Mrs. Snow and I had last Summer, Lou?' asked her mother.

"'Yes, but —'

"'But what has that to do with missions?' replied her mother, smiling. 'Let's see, Mrs. Snow would not cut her flowers, you remember. Her bed was a perfect blaze of color for a while. She wanted it to be the finest in town, and for a short time it was. Then the vines began to die, though she gave them the best attention. Before August there was nothing but dry stems left. The flowers had bloomed themselves to death, and drawn all the life from the roots.

The Sower. Millet.

"'This year she did not plant nasturtiums; she said they did not pay. My bed bloomed until frost. I was on the flower committee for the hospital, and sent great bunches of my nasturtiums every week to the sick people. I could not help it; they were so lovely, and brought so much brightness into the long, bare wards. I never thought of saving my plants by giving away my flowers, but so it proved.'

"'So you think, mamma, that the more we give to foreign missions, the more we have at home?' asked Lou.

"'"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty,"' quoted Mrs. Baker. 'When I saw the joy the flowers, gleaming like great blotches of red and yellow sunshine, brought into the days of those poor sick ones, I loved my flowers more than ever before and thanked God more heartily than I had ever done for the beautiful gift of the flowers. They taught me a lesson on foreign missions.'" — From *Boys and Girls*.

II. **GOD LOVETH A CHEERFUL GIVER**, v. 7. HILARIOUS GIVING. "Have you studied the precise import of the word translated 'cheerful' in 2 Cor. 9:7? It came to me with wonderful force a few days since as I was reading my Greek Testament. The word is *hilaron*. There is no mistaking its import. God loves a whole-souled, 'hilarious' giver — one who is not ashamed of the cause for which he gives — one who, with a strong, buoyant, joyous confidence in the cause, in the men who are working with him for it, and, above all, in the God who directs the work, gives freely, heartily, and with a swing. To the sense of duty from the law of Christian service, shall we not, by God's help, add this crowning grace and spontaneous, hearty, hilarious Christian giving of time and money for the cause of our Master?" — *Pres. Merrill E. Gates.*

12. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13. Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal distribution unto them, and unto all *men;*

14. And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15. Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift.

God loves such a giver because it is like his own giving ; because it shows a large loving heart which is not like a well from which the water must be laboriously pumped up, but like an overflowing spring that bubbles up freely and gladly from the heart of the earth, and is the source of the brook and the river which cheer and refresh the land through which it flows.

"It is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be never so fair,
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with holy care
In the heart of the deed so fair.

"The love is the priceless thing,
The treasure our treasure must hold;
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
Or tell the worth of the gold
By the love that cannot be told."

III. SYSTEMATIC GIVING. **Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him** (1 Cor. 16 : 2). This was Paul's systematic plan for the collection of money for the poor at Jerusalem, the subject of the present lesson. It was the first *Weekly Offering Plan.*

The Tenth Legion is " an enrolment of Christians whose practice it is to give to God for his work not less than one tenth of their income." Every one is better off for giving something directly to the Lord's work, and will be more prosperous spiritually and financially, and his children will grow up better men and women. No education is more important than education in giving to the Lord through those who need help. It is wise to decide on two things :

1. I will give a fixed proportion of my income.

2. I will begin to keep a careful account; not for others to see, but that I may know that I give the amount pledged. No one can remember without some account. Most of us will think we give more than we do. Dean Swift, in his clerical robes, was sitting alone in the mirrored room of a palace, and seeing himself reflected and repeated many times, exclaimed, " A meeting of the clergy, I believe." It is easy to have our special gifts repeated again and again in the mirror of our memories. I once at the Paris Exposition walked through the Crystal Maze, which is made of mirrors specially arranged, and saw myself multiplied an hundred times.

IV. **MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE.** *Paul's quotation to the Ephesian Elders, of the words of the Lord Jesus,* Acts 20 : 35. Miss Slattery asked her class what answer they would give to a girl whom she once heard say, " ' It is more blessed to give than to receive ' sounds very well, but I don't believe it." One of the replies was, " If you try it you will know that it does make you happy to give."

"Give strength, give thought, give deeds, give pelf,
Give love, give tears, and give thyself;
Give, give, be always giving.
Who gives not is not living.
The more we give, the more we live."

It is blessed to receive ; to be ministered unto, to receive love and friendship, to even receive pecuniary aid when needed. It is blessed to receive the good gifts of God, — success, usefulness, health, happiness, the love of Jesus, eternal life; as well as the temporal blessings God promises to those who seek first the Kingdom of heaven.

But it is still more blessed to give, — to give love, and friendship and money, and happiness, and help to be a ministering spirit, to lead others to heaven, to aid every good cause. For giving enlarges the soul, builds up the character, fits one for a larger experience of the best and noblest and most heavenly things that God can give.

Illustration. The best experience is a larger soul, a greater capacity, a purer, more unselfish being, a transformation from a charcoal to a diamond.

" Charcoal and diamond are the same material — carbon. One absorbs the light, the other reflects it. There are charcoal Christians and diamond Christians. Examine their creeds, they are the same; examine their religious experiences before a

church committee, they are the same. But one is gloomy, and the other glistens; one is dark, the other luminous. The first thing for a young Christian to do, looking about for some means of doing good, is to look to himself and see to it that he is a diamond, and not a charcoal." — *Christian Union.*

"Love divine will fill thy storehouse or thy handful still renew.
Scanty fare for one will often make a royal feast for two.
For the heart grows rich in giving; all its wealth is living grain.
Seeds which mildew in the garner, scattered, fill with gold the plain." — *Mrs. Charles.*

V. **THE RICHES OF THEIR LIBERALITY**, 2 Cor. 8 : 2. "*Can We Take Our Money to Heaven?* An English paper reports a recent epigram by the Rev. S. Chadwick, of Leeds. It is in reference to the common saying that when he dies a rich man must leave all his wealth behind him : 'That is not true. When you die, you can take your money with you, — but you must first change it into the currency of the country to which you are going.'"

VI. **LARGE GIFTS.** The amount of gifts in large sums each year in the United States for education, for charity, for reforms, hospitals, colleges, libraries, researches for human good, etc., is very great. In the first ten years of the 20th century these gifts in sums of $10,000 or more, amounted to nearly one billion dollars. The total of such large gifts in 1912 was more than $300,000,000. But these amounts are only a portion of the sums given away for such objects. The smaller gifts would doubtless more than double this total.

VII. **THEY FIRST GAVE THEIR OWN SELVES TO THE LORD**, 8 : 5. *The Angel of Little Sacrifices.* "Have you never seen her at work — the angel of little sacrifices? Have you never at least felt her influence? In every Christian family God has placed the angel of little sacrifices, trying to remove all the thorns, to lighten all the burdens, to share all the fatigues. The angel of little sacrifices has received from heaven the mission of those angels of whom the prophet speaks, who remove the stones from the road lest they should bruise the feet of travellers. But who will tell the thorns that have torn her hands, the pain her heart has endured? And yet she is always smiling. Have you never seen her at work, 'the angel of little sacrifices'? On earth she is called a mother, a friend, a sister, a wife. In heaven she is called a saint." See Hebrews 1 : 14.

"Little Dorrit turned at the door to say 'God bless you!' She said it very softly; but perhaps she may have been as audible above — who knows? — as a whole cathedral choir." — *Charles Dickens.*

VIII. **THE MEASURE OF THE GIFT.** The measure of a gift lies not in the largeness of the gift, but in the largeness of the love and sacrifice it expresses; not the size of the gift, but the cost to the giver; not the number of the sheaves, or of the measures of fruit, but the love and gratitude and faith that fills them. And in that great day when we present our fruits at the judgment seat, some large sheaves will grow larger by that measure, and some will shrink into a handful of half-grown stalks; and pebbles which the gatherer blushes to present as the only fruit from barren fields, will grow into gems and gold; and homely plants will be transformed into blossoms of Paradise; and the widow's mite will become a harp of gold; and a handful of grain become the seed of the Tree of Life.

IX. **TRAINING THE CHILDREN OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TO GIVE.** The Sunday school is the training school for the church, not only in its teachings, its consecration to Christ, its various forms of usefulness, but also in systematic giving, largely to the same objects for which collections are taken in the church, but often some allied department of them that will particularly interest them. Part of their giving should be for the support of the church itself. I know a Sunday school that for many years gave only to other objects. But the children should be trained early to give to the church a portion of their giving that they may learn to love it, and support it as they are expected to do when they grow up.

On the other hand, there are schools which use for themselves nearly all the money they raise. This is far worse than the other.

Some years ago I visited the Sunday school of the 14th Street Presbyterian Church in New York City, which had arrived at such perfection in the matter of giving that it took three Sundays to find a single scholar who did not bring a contribution. Less than eighteen times in the whole year was there a failure in any scholar, above the primary department, to bring a contribution.

"*Learning to be Givers.* To be able to give well is an art that we can learn, like any other art. Persistent practice is the secret of mastery here as elsewhere."

LESSON VIII. — August 20.

THE RIOT AT EPHESUS. — Acts 19:23–41.

PRINT vs. 29–41. COMMIT vs. 29, 30.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.* — 1 Tim. 6:10.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

It may be well to try a varied form of the plan used in our last lesson on Acts (Lesson IV) and see if we cannot do it better, and make it still more effective.

The missionary adventures of Paul are even more varied than in that lesson.

Let the teacher take the part of **Paul** and be questioned by the class.

The whole class may be **The Band of 12.**

Then there are **Jews, Tyrannus, Sceva the Magician, converts** (the whole class), **Demetrius a business man, Diana, the town clerk, strikers** and a **mob.**

Each one flashes with rays of spiritual and moral truth.

When any scholar speaks in character it is well for him to rise.

Use a good map, and keep in mind both the ancient and the modern names.

LEARN BY HEART.

Acts 18: 2, 4, 18–20.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

The Third Missionary Journey covered about four years, from A.D. 53 to 57.

Paul at Ephesus, nearly three years, A.D. 53–56.

Time of the Riot at Ephesus, A.D. 56, three years or so after our last lesson on Acts.

Place. — Ephesus on the Ægean Sea: the capital of the Province of Asia, the most western province of Asia Minor.

Paul's Companions in Ephesus were Timothy, Titus (2 Cor. 7: 13, 14), Stephanas, Fortunatus, Apollos (1 Cor. 16: 12, 17), Aquila, Priscilla, Chloe (1 Cor. 1: 11), Gaius, Aristarchus, and Achaicus.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The outline of Paul's travels on his Third Missionary Journey.
Ephesus as a mission field.
The seven churches evangelized from this centre (Rev. chs. 2 and 3).
The Band of 12 at Ephesus, and their special need.
Burning of the books of Magic and its meaning.
Shrines of Diana.
Sceva and his seven sons.
Business men when reform interferes with their profits.
Mob violence as a means of gaining our ends.
Opposition showing the progress of the Gospel.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Paul's Missionary Adventures and Successes at Ephesus.

I. Paul Enters upon his Third Missionary Journey, 18: 29; 19: 1.
II. An Ephesian Guide through the City.
III. A Small Religious Guild, 12 in Number, vs. 2–7.
IV. Jews and their Synagogue, vs. 8, 9.
V. Tyrannus and his Lecture Hall, vs. 9, 10.
VI. How Paul Illustrated the Spirit of the Gospel, vs. 11–17.
VII. Believers Burning their Books of Magic, vs. 18–20.
VIII. Demetrius, a Business Man of Ephesus, vs. 23–28.
IX. The Mob, vs. 29–34.
X. The Town Clerk Quelling the Mob, vs. 35–41.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The best description and discussion of the shrines and the worship of Diana is found in Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*, chap. 8, "St. Paul in Ephesus," and his *St. Paul the Traveller.*

On Ephesus see Harper's *Classical Dictionary*, and any of the *Bible Dictionaries.* Maclaren's *Expositions*, Acts, vol. 2. *Paul the Missionary*, by Dr. Wm. M. Taylor. McGiffert's *Apostolic Age. The Holy Land of Asia Minor*, by Dr. F. E. Clark, is very interesting.

On the school of Tyrannus, see Ramsay's *St. Paul*, pp. 270, 271.

Lewin's pictures and descriptions of Ephesus in his *Life of St. Paul* are full and vivid.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

On demoniacs, see Dr. Nevius, on *Demon Possession and Allied Themes.*

On the burning of the magical books, compare description of Savonarola in George Eliot's *Romola*, or any history of

Florence and Savonarola; the tract, *Captain Ball's Experience.*

See Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives,* and his autobiography, *The Making of an American;* General Booth's *Darkest England.*

Florence M. Kingsley's story, *Paul the Herald of the Cross.* (Altemus.)

David Beaton's story, *Cyrus the Magician,* centered in Ephesus. (Pilgrim Press.)

THE LESSON IN ART.

St. Paul Preaching at Ephesus, by Doré * and Leseuer.*

I. **PAUL ENTERS UPON HIS THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY,** 18 : 29 ; 19 : 1. Paul remained at Antioch, the home church which had sent him forth, long enough to tell the wondrous story of the Gospel among the Gentiles, the churches he, with his helpers, had founded, his adventures of various kinds, the dangers to which he had been exposed, and the marvellous deliverances God had wrought for him.

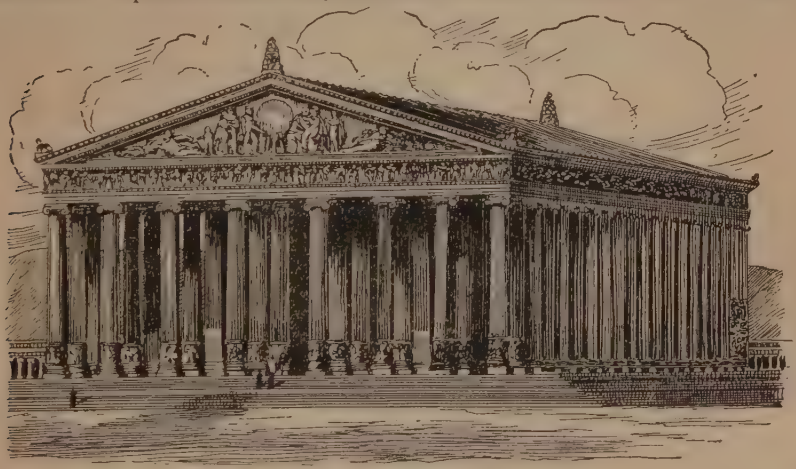
It is ever a blessed thing for the home church to hear from her missionaries, and the missionaries need to come in contact and fellowship with churches. The Missionary Boards are wise in having their missionaries come home every few years.

This is probably the last time Paul was able to visit Antioch.

How long he remained in Antioch we do not know, but " after he had spent some time there he departed " and went through Asia Minor and revisited the Churches he had founded on his first tour in Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples; for there was great need (Gal. 1 : 6–12 ; 3 : 1–5 ; 5 : 1, 12, 15). The churches we know are those of Tarsus, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch in Pisidia. There were doubtless others that are not named.

Paul, having thus **passed through the upper coasts** or country, the districts lying up from the sea, turned to the southwest and came to Ephesus on the Ægean Sea, where he had spent a brief time on his return from his second missionary tour.

II. **AN EPHESIAN GUIDE** will take us about the city of Ephesus which was situated on the river Cayster, which flows into the Icarian Sea, an arm of the Ægean. The city stood on the south of a plain about five miles long from east to west, and three miles broad. Ephesus was not only the capital of the Roman province of Asia, but



Temple of Diana, restored.

was the city of the greatest importance in all Asia Minor, and the principal emporium of trade in the East. The city became very rich. Its inhabitants were Greeks, using the Greek language.

Our guide, having given this description, first takes us outside the city walls into the open plain for a mile or two to a little hill which has always been a religious centre. At the base of this hill he points out the crowning glory of Ephesus, the great temple of Diana, one of the seven great wonders of the world, and whose magnificence has been a marvel ever since. It glittered in brilliant beauty at the head of the harbor, and it was said that the sun saw nothing in his course more magnificent than Diana's temple. In front of the temple was the rude idol, said to have fallen from heaven.

He next shows us the immense amphitheatre, or Colosseum, on the western slope of one of the hills, the largest ever built by Greeks; said by Conybeare and Howson to have been capable of holding 50,000 people. Others say 25,000. In this Colosseum we will witness the riot incited by the makers of silver shrines.

The guide points out the Jewish synagogue, and the school of Tyrannus, where Paul is to preach; and the guilds of the makers of silver shrines. Through the four clefts in the surrounding hills the roads ran to the other six of the seven cities in which were the "seven churches of Asia" referred to in the second and third chapters of Revelation.

It is interesting to know why Ephesus perished, while other cities remained till to-day. A writer in the Chicago *Advance* tells us that it was due to two causes: (1) "The silting up of her harbor and the consequent destruction of her commerce, answers the political economist." (2) "Ephesus perished because the silting up of her harbor flooded the low plains and bred mosquitoes which produced malaria which destroyed the health and commercial power of Ephesus. This is what pulled down the temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world." It was the same cause which made the first attempt to dig the Panama Canal a failure; and the removal of the mosquitoes made the present canal possible.

III. **THE SMALL RELIGIOUS GUILD WITH TWELVE MEMBERS**, vs. 2–7. Among the first persons whom Paul met was a little band of Christians. Paul, when travelling from Corinth to Antioch at the close of his second journey, left Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus. The eloquent Apollos came there soon after. But it was only a few weeks before Paul returned, and it is not strange that in a great city the two small companies had not met before.

Paul found that this obscure little band, far from Palestine, had been baptized with John's baptism of repentance at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, and had returned to Ephesus before the baptism by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Paul told them of this wonderful new spiritual experience. He baptized them into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then the Holy Spirit came upon them as on the first disciples, and they received the spiritual transforming power, the new inspiration of love, and joy, and peace, such as they had never felt before. It was the real higher life which we need to-day. It was a change from twilight to noon day. "It made victory over sin and temptation easy compared with mere repentance." It was like a change from a boat rowed against wind and tide, to the same boat sweeping over the waves with sails filled with a favoring wind.

"'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant;
Oh, Life, not Death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that we want."

IV. **JEWS AND THEIR SYNAGOGUE**, vs. 8, 9. Paul naturally began his work in the Jewish synagogue, where the Scriptures were read and taught, and in which the promises of the Messiah were believed, for Whom the Jews longed and hoped as their Deliverer. Their idea of the Messiah was so different from that of Jesus, and of Paul derived from the Scriptures as a whole, and not from selected parts, from which the Jews had formed their ideal, that Paul argued and reasoned, and explained the Scriptures, and persuaded, and taught the truth concerning the kingdom of God which all the Jews throughout the world were expecting, and which had now begun. They were expecting an outward national deliverance; the Christians were expecting a deliverance from sin and all its evils, into the holiness of the Kingdom of heaven before the outward deliverance was possible.

This discussion continued for three months, till there came to be two parties bitterly opposed to one another; and **divers were hardened and . . . spake evil of that Way before the multitude**. The word "hardened" is a metaphor taken from ground which is so dry and hard that no seed can take root in it. Their hearts were so hard that no argument or appeal could make an impression; like hardened soil in which no seed of truth can take root.

V. **TYRANNUS AND HIS LECTURE HALL**, vs. 9, 10. When the preaching of the gospel in the synagogue could no longer be a message of peace, but aroused such bitter opposition that the service became a wrangle and controversy, Paul ceased preaching there, and removed with the Christians to the school or lecture room of Tyrannus. Nothing is known of this man. But the hall was either lent or let by him to Paul, or it was a public lecture room named after him, as Albert Hall in London or Faneuil Hall in Boston. "Here we may infer that lectures on philosophy were

held, and it is rather a good sign that learning had a place in the city." — *Prof. R. W. Rogers.* Ramsay suggests that it was the lecture room used by the professors of rhetoric and philosophy a part of the day, and Paul at other hours. "According to the Bezan Text, Paul taught after the usual work of the lecture room was concluded, *i.e.* 'after business hours.'"

Here Paul **continued by the space of two years**, in addition to the three months' teaching in the synagogue.

From this centre **all they which dwelt in Asia**, the Roman province of which Ephesus was the capital and chief city, **heard the word.** Paul had with him a number of helpers, as Timothy, Erastus, Titus, Epaphras, etc., and a number of able men who could assist him. Being compelled to earn his own living with Aquila who had settled here, he could not leave for any long stay in the smaller cities. "Churches arose in three cities of the Lycus Valley, — Laodicea, Colossai, and Hierapolis, though Paul himself did not go there. All the *seven churches of Asia*, mentioned in the Revelation, were probably founded during this period, for all these cities were within easy reach of Ephesus, and all were great centres of trade." — *Ramsay, Paul the Traveller*, p. 274.

VI. **HOW PAUL ILLUSTRATED THE SPIRIT OF THE GOSPEL**, vs. 11–17. In Ephesus, the centre of magic and witchcraft, special power was given Paul to work miracles that conquered the magicians in their own stronghold. He actually did what the sorcerers only pretended to do. The Ephesians were so bound up in belief in magic that it seemed necessary to show that the gospel was mightier than these other powers, which came from Satan, the father of deceit.

The Gospel, indeed, proves its power most and best by transforming the characters of men, turning bad men into good men, drunkards into sober men, selfish men into lovers of God and man. But it also does more for the comfort, the healing, the prosperity, — the whole list of blessings that uplift and civilize individuals and the community. Deeds of love and service are among the fruits of Christianity. Jesus proved his mission by healing diseases and casting out devils. So did Paul. So every Christian nation is doing in some degree. And these things help to awaken heathen nations to seek the Christian religion.

Some vagabond exorcists and the seven sons of Sceva tried to imitate Paul in casting out evil spirits in the name of Jesus, — to really do what they had pretended to do before — but the evil spirit in the man answered, **Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.** Only the real spirit of Christ, and of his Gospel can succeed in casting out the evil spirits in the nation and the heart. Thus **the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.**

VII. **BELIEVERS BURNING THEIR BOOKS OF MAGIC**, vs. 18–20. The victory of the Gospel, healing and actually casting out evil spirits, greatly impressed the new converts. **Many that believed**, who had been dupes of the Magicians, and had not realized how these magical practices were contrary to the Gospel, had their eyes opened; "and instead of continuing secretly practising or approving of the deeds of magic, declared their wrong doings." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* **Confessed and showed their deeds** by public confession and renunciation. Every generation of Christians has some of the evils of the age clinging to it at first. Blessed are they whose eyes are opened, and who confess and renounce.

19. **Many of them**, referring to those who had been magicians previous to their conversion, "as the former verse refers to their dupes." **Brought their books together.** These books were, no doubt, parchment or papyrus volumes, filled with these partly Jewish, partly heathenish incantations, recipes for love philtres, formulas more or less ancient to be used in casting out evil spirits, and the like. — *Professor Schaff.* Some of these magical writings have lately been discovered dating back to 1200 B.C., and are now in the Vienna Museum. **And burned them.** The imperfect tense of the Greek word "describes them as throwing book after book into the burning fire." — *Hackett, Blass*, etc.

Savonarola's Bonfire of Vanities. "The student of the history of Florence cannot help recalling the analogous scene in that city, when men and women, artists and musicians, brought the things in which they most delighted — pictures, ornaments, costly dresses — and burnt them in the Piazza of St. Mark at the bidding of Savonarola."

Anthony Comstock, of New York, for many years has been collecting and burning, or otherwise destroying, at great danger to his life, the obscene pictures and objects

which vilest men have been sending all over the country to young people in schools and colleges.

A Chinese Fortune-teller Burns his Books. A fortune-teller had heard the Missionary preach on ver. 19 of this lesson. Late in the evening he came to the Missionary's home and "expressed a desire to have done with it all, and like the sorcerers of Ephesus to burn his books.

"When they reached his house, he said he would rather burn his books at once than wait till morning. So, having called the villagers to witness the deed, he took out all his books, and burned them. One book cost twenty dollars." — *Miss Innes of Soochow, China.*

Coin of Claudius (from Akerman).

This coin was current when Paul was at Ephesus.

The value of the Ephesian books was **found to be fifty thousand pieces of silver**, the denarius, the "penny" of the A. V. in the parable of Jesus, the usual pay for a day's work. The sum was worth about $8500 worth of silver, but equivalent to from $50,000 to $100,000 in our time in purchasing power.

Sacrifice for Christ is one of the strongest proofs of faith in him ; and one of the most influential means of spreading his religion. Naturally, after this the word of God grew mightily and prevailed.

When the author was preaching in a manufacturing town a member of my congregation, who was a large manufacturer of braid, became converted, the fact was made known to his employees by the fact that he ordered the enlargement of the drums on which the braid was measured, so that each piece would be of full length.

When any one is converted to Christ he must leave behind him all bad business and bad habits, whatever the cost may be. If he is not willing to do this, he proves himself to be no Christian. The only question will be, *What is right?* not, *What will it cost?*

"Burn, Fire, Burn! and quickly destroy	BURN,	All impure thoughts.
The very last of Earth's alloy.		All profane words.
Burn up only Pains and Aches,		All pride, all selfishness.
Our morbid memory of Mistakes.	FIRE,	All anger, and passion.
Burn up our Prejudices, and		All meanness, disorder.
Remembered Ills on every hand.		All neglect of your heavenly Father.
Burn, Fire, Burn! our Foulness cure;	BURN.	All disobedience to His laws.
Purify as thou art pure.		All things of which He disapproves.

VIII. **DEMETRIUS A BUSINESS MAN OF EPHESUS**, vs. 23–28. Toward the end of Paul's stay at Ephesus, **there arose no small stir about that Way**, so called because the Gospel was a Way of Salvation, a Way of true living, a Way of true worship, a Way to everlasting life.

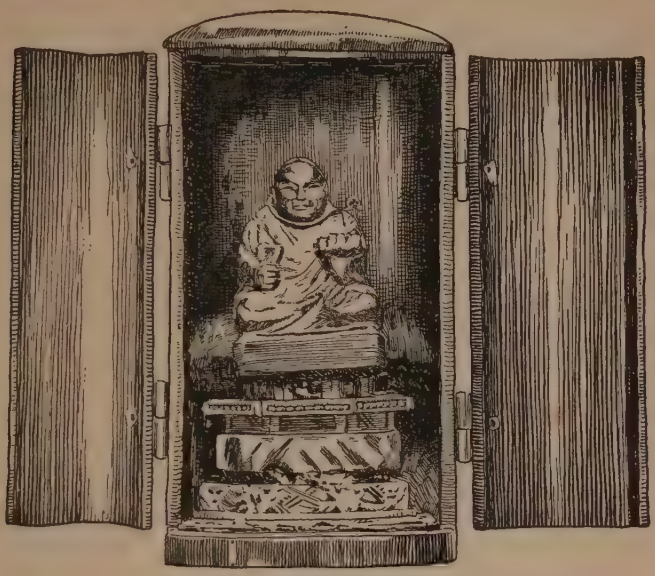
24. A certain man named Demetrius. Probably the head of the whole guild of shrine makers. **Which made silver shrines for** (Am. R., "of") **Diana.** The Ephesian Diana (not the Greek Diana, who was a huntress) was represented as a standing idol, the upper part of the body in front being covered with rows of breasts, symbolizing her as the universal mother of all life. The lower part is merely an upright block rudely representing robes, covered with symbols and figures of animals.

The shrines "were small models of the goddess Diana standing on a pedestal over which a canopy was erected." — *Westminster New Test.* "The silver shrines were small models of that part of the temple of Diana in which the goddess was placed." The shrines were made of terra-cotta or marble for the use of the poorer classes, of bronze and silver for the rich. No silver shrines of the Ephesian Diana are known to be in existence, probably because in the destruction of the city and temple these would be taken and melted up for coin. But marble shrines abound in the neighborhood of Ephesus ; and there are many terra-cotta shrines, but they are not so numerous as the marble ones, probably on account of their perishable character. These shrines were of different sizes, some of them so small that they could be carried about on the person.

These silver shrines **brought no small gain** (Am. R., "no little business"). These shrines were sold to the people of Ephesus, to the many travellers, pilgrims, and merchants who visited Ephesus, and were sent to distant cities for sale. The traffic was large and lucrative, and many of the people were interested in it directly or indirectly.

The business was very large because these silver shrines were used all over the province of Asia, and in so many ways, — they were carried on their persons as

charms against disease or accidents, they were set up in their homes as protection, they were used as dedicatory offerings to the goddess, and placed in her temple, as now in many places in Europe such offerings are placed around the image of the Virgin Mary as thank offerings for favors, or peace offerings in hopes of answer to petitions.



A Japanese Shrine enclosing the God formerly worshipped in a Household in Japan.

Now in the study of the author. Probably the silver shrines of Diana were something like this.

" They were purchased by pilgrims to the temple, just as rosaries and images of the Virgin are bought by pilgrims to Lourdes." — *M. R. Vincent.*

For example the " Virgin of the Pillar " in the Cathedral in Saragossa, Spain, which is smilingly spoken of as the " wealthiest young woman in Spain," around which is gathered " an enormous hoard of priceless gems, gifts of gratitude for imaginary benefits, from many generations of devotees.

" Not far from the cathedral is one of the principal jewellers' shops, the largest of its plate glass windows entirely devoted to the display of *silver shrines* and models of the pillar and idol in gold and silver. Some of those models were magnificent, and must have commanded a high price, while others were comparatively cheap.

" Every Saragossa bride receives on her wedding morning a silver model of ' Our Lady of the Pillar,' which is given the most honored place in her new home." — *Christian Endeavor World.*

Capital of Column brought from the Temple of Diana.

The great success of Paul and the progress of Christianity in Ephesus is shown by the statement of Demetrius himself. He called the other manufacturers together in council and showed that they were in danger of losing their business and their wealth. Then he added another argument, — that there was danger that Diana herself and her magnificent temple should be destroyed. One writer calls Demetrius " the pious business man," but he was far from " pious," although he had a kind of heathen religion, which he used as an incentive to excite the populace to drive Paul from Ephesus. This was in direct con-

29. And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

30. And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.

31. And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring *him* that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

32. Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

33. And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people.

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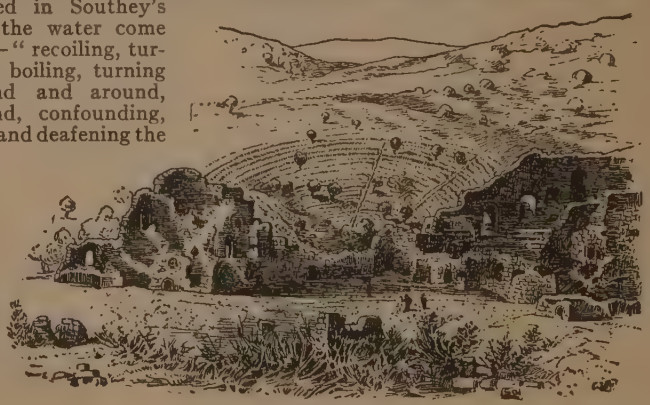
trast with the character of the Christians, who made great sacrifices in burning their own (not other people's) bad books which were injuring the people.

Professor Ramsay calls attention to the fact that the heathen "did not care two straws whether their neighbor worshipped twenty gods or twenty-one . . . it was all a matter of indifference." Gradually people began to realize that Christianity meant a social revolution, that it did not mean to take its place alongside of the other religions, but to destroy them. The discovery was made in a homely way, familiar to us all, viz., through the pocket. As here and in Philippi, when the pocket was touched the riot began. — *Church in the Roman Empire.*

Modern Examples. The saloon makes the same argument against temperance and prohibitory laws as the craftsmen of Ephesus against Christianity. Some politicians oppose civil service reform and the purification of politics in our cities; some business interests are arrayed against laws for honest dealings, laws that prevent long hours for workmen, and especially children. Fairly good men rent houses for liquor saloons; others rent to the poor unsanitary houses that breed sickness and weakness and death; others pay too low wages, etc., etc.

The modern world contains many of the descendants of the Ephesian silversmiths, opposing every reform that interferes with trade and money-making. See Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives.*

IX. **THE MOB, THE RIOT,** vs. 29–34. **The whole city was filled with confusion.** The Greek word for "confusion" is a metaphor from the waters rushing over rocks, well expressed in Southey's poem, "How does the water come down at Lodore?"—"recoiling, turmoiling, toiling, and boiling, turning and twisting around and around, with endless rebound, confounding, astounding, dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound." The mob rushed to the great amphitheatre, taking with them two of Paul's fellow-workers from Europe, since they could not find Paul. Paul tried to go in, hoping to quell the mob, but was prevented by his friends.



Ruins of an Amphitheatre of Ephesus.

31. Chief of Asia (Am. R., "Asiarchs," *i.e.* those who had charge of the games, etc.).

33. The Jews put forward one of their number, named Alexander, who attempted **to make his defence unto the people**; either in order "to dissociate himself and them

34. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians.

35. And when the town-clerk had appeased the people, he said, *Ye* men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from Jupiter?

36. Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

37. For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

38. Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

39. But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.

40. For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

41. And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

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from any coalition with Paul and his companions against the Diana worship," or " as a Jewish Christian he was put forward by the Jews maliciously hoping that he might be sacrificed to the popular tumult." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* But the effort only stirred up the mob to shout louder, **Great is Diana of the Ephesians**, for two hours longer.

X. **THE TOWN CLERK** (35–41) now interfered and by skilful management quelled the excited mob. **Worshipper** (Am. R., " temple-keeper "). He showed that (1) the worship of Diana was so settled in Ephesus that no company of Jews could overthrow it. You have no real cause for violence. **The image** (of Diana) **which fell down from Jupiter** their chief god, as meteoric stones occasionally fall from the sky.

(2) Paul had not committed the wrong with which he was charged. He was not a **robber of churches** (Am. R., " temples "). His converts had been very careful not to blaspheme the goddess. His method of overcoming idolatry is quite noticeable. He preached the gospel, he set Jesus Christ before the people.

(3) There was a better way of redress, if there were need, through the law courts. In ver. 38 Am. R. reads, " the courts are open, and there are proconsuls; let them accuse one another."

(4) There was danger that the Roman government might interfere and deprive a turbulent city of its greatly prized liberties. Verse 40 in the Am. R. reads, " For indeed we are in danger to be accused concerning this day's riot, there being no cause for it; and as touching it we shall not be able to give account of this concourse."

Thus peace and quiet were restored.

The signs of these times meant that it was best for Paul to leave immediately for another field of labor, while Ephesus was settling down into quiet peace, and the church continued to grow in character and numbers. Therefore Paul bade the beloved church good-by, and **departed for to go into Macedonia** (Acts 20 : 1).

LESSON IX. — August 27.

JOURNEYING TOWARD JERUSALEM. — Acts 20: 16–38.

PRINT vs. 16–27. COMMIT vs. 24.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace.* — Acts 20:32.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

This lesson is Paul's Review of his two years' work in Europe and his nearly three years at Ephesus.

We should connect it with the lessons which describe the results of his work at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, and especially at Ephesus.

Use the maps, Bible and modern.

Make use of pictures, — Wilde's Bible pictures, Underwood's stereographs, and what you can find in books.

Make the whole story as real as if you were reading a book of modern travels.

"A college student once said to a distinguished professor of history who had referred to the roads Solomon built: 'Do you mean to tell us that Solomon was a real person? I thought it was just somebody in the Bible.'".

Keep some connection between Bible history and other ancient and modern historical characters and events.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Besides the *Commentaries* referred to in the early lessons of this quarter. Maurice Jones gives more than 30 pages to Paul's address to the Ephesian Church in his *St. Paul the Orator*. Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church;* and his *St. Paul the Traveller*, ch. 14.

For the Ephesus interview, read Farrar's brilliant description in his *St. Paul*. Wm. M. Taylor's *Paul the Missionary*, ch. 19. Maclaren's *Expositions of Acts*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies* gives a very spirited exposition of the duties of caring for the flock.

Jacox's *Side Lights on Scripture Texts* (p. 278) gives literary illustrations of this parting scene; and on p. 284, "A Plea for the Weakly."

Shakespeare's play of *Julius Cæsar*, describing the parting of Brutus and Cassius on the eve of the battle of Philippi.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 20, 21, 24.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

The Review of Paul's last two missionary journeys (which had occupied something over six years, A.D. 50–56), extended over several months, from late in A.D. 56 to May 1, A.D. 57, when he sailed from Ephesus for Jerusalem.

Time. — Paul left Ephesus late in A.D. 56. December, 56, January and February, 57, at Corinth. He reached Miletus and conferred with the Ephesian elders the last of April (according to Ramsay).

Place. — Paul, after leaving Ephesus, went through Macedonia to Corinth, and returned by the same route to Philippi, Troas, and Miletus.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The route of Paul from Ephesus to Miletus.
The churches Paul revisited.
Their condition.
The light Paul's review throws on his work at Ephesus.
The doctrines Paul preached at Ephesus.
Were these the most important, and why?
The inheritance of the saints.
More blessed to give than to receive.
The episode at Troas.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Paul's Review of His Missionary Work.
The Teacher's Review of His Work.

I. Paul's Statesmanship. His Great Plans for the Future.
His three plans.
II. Reviewing the Churches of Eastern Europe, vs. 1–3.
III. Delegates to Jerusalem Assembling at Troas, vs. 3–12.
IV. The Farewell Meeting of Paul with the Ephesian Elders, vs. 13–38.

I. **PAUL'S STATESMANSHIP AND GENIUS FOR ORGANIZATION.** *First Plan.* With the completion of his work at Ephesus, Paul planned to close this period of his evangelistic work in the Greek-speaking countries where he had spent so much of his time and labor, in three great missionary journeys. Before he left these regions he planned to review his work there, as he had done twice before in Asia Minor, to guide, inspire, and correct any evils that may have arisen in any of the churches.

Second Plan. "The mind of Paul was now full of a great idea. He was to leave the Hellenic lands and the Ægean shores, and go right away into the Latin-speaking west, to Rome and to Spain, and make those regions the sphere of his future work." — *Ramsay.*

He had long desired to do this (Acts 19:21; Rom. 15:22–29). He accomplished

his purpose at last but in the strangest, most unexpected way, though in fact the best possible way, as we shall see in our later lessons.

Third Plan. "Before he went to Italy and the West, his work in the Hellenic countries should be completed by bringing the churches of the four provinces, Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia, into closer relations with the original church at Jerusalem, and the feeling of brotherhood and unity should be quickened by the influence of charity." — *Ramsay.* Hence the Gentile churches were set to gathering funds for this purpose, which Paul was now carrying to Jerusalem.

II. **REVIEWING THE CHURCHES OF EASTERN EUROPE**, vs. 1–3. We learn from 2 Cor. 1 : 8–10, written not a great while after Paul left Ephesus, that he left that city because his life was in danger if he remained, and he could no longer do his work there. He was "in a depressed frame of mind from ill health," and troubled because he could not complete his work there.

Church at Philippi. From Ephesus he doubtless took a trading vessel along the eastern shores of the Ægean Sea, northward to Troas on the N. W. coast of Asia Minor, thence northwest to Philippi, his first church in Europe (see Epistle to the Philippians, and Acts 16 : 12–40), churches of Thessalonica (modern *Saloniki*) and Berea, where Timothy joined him. (See the Epistles to the Thessalonians, and Acts 17 : 1–14.) Ramsay thinks Paul spent the summer in Macedonia, extending his work as far as Illyricum on the Adriatic, now a part of Albania (Rom. 15 : 19).

The Church at Corinth. In the autumn he went to Greece and spent three months there, chiefly in Corinth, where he had much to do amid sickness and afflictions on every side, "fightings without and fears within" (2 Cor. 4 : 7–11 ; 7 : 5, 6) in caring for all the churches (2 Cor. 11 : 28) and correcting wrong conduct (2 Cor. 12 : 20, 21 ; 13 : 1, 2). It was four or five years since he had left them after a stay of a year and a half. (See the two Epistles to the Corinthians ; and Acts 18 : 1–17.)

Paul was giving his last farewells to the churches he loved. "The address to the Ephesian elders is given as a sample of these farewell visits," says Professor Stifler. "In the section now before us, we find, for the first time, warm exhibitions of love for Paul" (Gal. 4 : 14, 15 ; 1 Thes. 3 : 6 ; Phil. 1 : 26).

Reviewing our lives to see the progress we have made, and the changes we should make ; reviewing our own Sunday school and the Sunday schools of our country and the world, has a very great value in many ways. Any real review is full of suggestions. Take for instance the Review presented by Secretary Marion Lawrance at the triennial convention in June, 1914, a pamphlet of 85 pages which can be had at the rooms, 1416 Mallers Building, Chicago. The *Sunday School Times* gives some hint of it in this way :

"Did you know that 1665 new members join the Sunday-schools of North America every day of the year? That has been the average daily increase for the last three years, making the triennium's total increase in the Sunday-school enrolment of North America, 1,823,686.

"The report of General Secretary Marion Lawrance was a Gatling gun of facts and figures, needs and hopes.

"This pamphlet is probably the most remarkable presentation of Sunday-school facts in North America that has yet been made."

III. **THE DELEGATES TO JERUSALEM FROM THE VARIOUS CHURCHES ASSEMBLING AT TROAS**, vs. 3–12. During all this time collections were taken up in the various churches on this tour (Rom. 15 : 26 ; 1 Cor. 16 : 1–5 ; Acts 24 : 17) for Paul to carry to the poor disciples at Jerusalem, according to his promise seven years before (Gal. 2 : 10). For the purpose of carrying these gifts of the Gentile churches, and as expressions of their good will, seven delegates were appointed (ver. 4) ; "Galatia sent as delegates Gaius (Derbe) and Timothy (Lystra), Asia sent Tychicus and Trophimus, Macedonia sent Sopater (Berœa), Aristarchus and Secundus (Thessalonica), and Luke himself (Philippi). Achaia alone sent no delegate ; but possibly it requested Paul to act as its representative, for its contribution in money was liberal.

"The party gathered in Troas on the Asiatic coast."

There doubtless were other reasons for sending these delegates with Paul. In carrying so large a sum in trust, these acted, as it were, as auditors of his accounts, and would be witnesses that all was right. Paul sought to avoid even the suspicion of the malversations which the tongues of slanderers were so ready to impute to him (2 Cor. 8 : 20, 21).

They would act as a bodyguard through the more dangerous part of the journey, and the money distributed among so many carriers would be safer. The necessity of

16. For Paul had determind to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

17. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

this is shown in verse 3, where we are told that " as Paul was on the point of sailing from Corinth for Syria, it was found that the Jews had a plot to kill him ; opportunity for murder would be easily found in a ship crowded with pilgrims. He therefore changed his plans." Paul went by land to Philippi, where he was joined by Luke. " Sopater accompanied Paul through Macedonia as a friend." — *Rackham.* These three sailed from Philippi to Troas, the rendezvous of all the delegates. At Troas they remained a full week, " that is, Tuesday, April 19 to Monday, April 25."

" The church had already begun to observe the weekly festival of the Resurrection, our Sabbath, in place of, or where the disciples were Jews, in addition to their weekly Sabbath." — *Plumptre.* See 1 Cor. 16 : 2.

On the last Sunday before Paul and his delegates were to continue their journey to Jerusalem, a special service was held with preaching by Paul, the Lord's supper, and a " love-feast," a social eating together which was needful in an all-night gathering.

The Ruins at Miletus.

This was an evening service, for the slaves and those who worked for heathen masters could not control their time so as to avoid labor on the Sabbath; but they met in the evening after sunset.

The most notable incident in this service was connected with a young man named Eutychus, who was sitting in a window in the third loft (Am. R., " story ") and being " gradually overpowered by sleep " fell down into the court below, and was taken up dead. Paul immediately went down and fell on him, and embracing him, as Elisha did in the case of the son of the woman of Zarephath, he was able to say, Trouble not yourselves ; for his life is in him. The story seems to be related as a witness to the Gospel and the power of the prayer of faith, the readiness of Paul to help in every time of need, and to the power of God abiding in the apostle.

IV. **THE FAREWELL MEETING OF PAUL AND THE EPHESIAN ELDERS**, vs. 13–38. Paul and the Delegation, accompanied by Luke, as we see from his use of " us " and " we," left Troas the next day (Mon. Apr. 25), Paul going by land, the others by the sea route. They met at the port of Assos, and sailed southward, past Ephesus, and cast anchor at Miletus in the early morning of Thurs. Apr. 28. Here the ship remained till Sunday, May 1, or Monday, May 2.

A messenger was immediately sent to Ephesus to request the elders of the church to come to Miletus to meet Paul. It would take two days for a swift messenger to go to Ephesus to summon the elders, and to return with them to Miletus, so that " the third day of Paul's stay at Miletus was devoted to the presbyters," Sat. April 30. (These dates are according to Professor Ramsay, *Paul the Traveller*, p. 294.)

18. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,

19. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:

20. *And* how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,

21. Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

22. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:

23. Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

24. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

——THE TEACHER AND HIS SCHOLARS——

Dr. Wm. M. Taylor arranges Paul's address under four Divisions.

1. *A Retrospect* of his labors and aims.
2. *A Prospect* of what lay before him.
3. *An Exhortation* as to what they should do and be.
4. *A Commendation* of them to God's love and grace and care.

What Paul said to the Ephesian Church is not only an example to Pastors and Churches, but is also especially applicable to teachers and their scholars.

First. The Retrospect, vs. 18–21. **Ye yourselves know . . . after what manner I have been with you.** You scholars know the character of your teacher, his aims, his manner of life, his desires and hopes for you. **At all seasons**, Am. R., "All the time."

19. **Serving the Lord** with you, by teaching, by living, by exerting every power within me, to guide you in the best way of life; at the same time **with all humility** (Am. R., "lowliness") **of mind**, conscious of many imperfections. **With (many) tears** for your salvation, in spite of **temptations** (Am. R., "trials," trials of patience and temper) and hindrances and difficulties and self-denials, more than you know. **By the lying in wait**, Am. R., "by the plots."

20. **I kept back nothing** (Am. R., "shrank not from declaring unto you anything") **that was profitable unto you**, encouragement, reproof, warnings, helps, truths, training, social life, hard study. I **have taught you publicly** in the class, and **from house to house**, — visited you in your homes, and invited you to my home.

21. And the purpose and aim of all this has been to lead you to **repentance toward God**, the beginning of the new life, a voluntary hatred of sin; **and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ**, a faith that trusts him as Saviour, and leader to guide, and king to obey and love and serve with all the heart and mind and strength. Paul's aim, as is the Teacher's aim, was to make all the people patriotic citizens of the kingdom of heaven on earth, fighting the good fight of faith against all evils, even the principalities and powers of evil, and building up the heavenly character in all men by overcoming evil with good.

Second. The Prospect, vs. 22–24. **And now I go bound in the spirit**, "constrained by the Spirit." — *Ramsay*. "Under obligation, not outwardly bound, he yet knows and feels himself as one bound" (*Exp. Gk. Test.*) by conscience and duty. Paul was on his way to Jerusalem, in order to carry out his great plan of a united, federated church of Jews and Gentiles. It was a great undertaking, and he knew not just what was to befall him, but he did know that **bonds and afflictions** awaited him.

Compare Luther, who when pressed to stay away from the Diet at Worms, where he was to be tried for heresy, said to the messenger, "Go, tell your master that, though there should be as many devils as there are tiles on its roofs, I would enter it." And, again, of his mortal enemy, Duke George, "If I had business at Leipsic, I would ride into Leipsic, though it rained Duke Georges for nine days running."

24. But Paul could say that **none of these things move me** from my purpose **neither count I my life dear unto myself so that I might finish my course with joy**

25. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

26. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men*.

27. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

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and the ministry I have received from the Lord Jesus. (Am. R. reads this verse, "But I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry," etc.)

The Teacher will seldom have such trials as Paul had, but he knows that he will have trials and hard work, and various difficulties and hindrances in his way. But he goes on just the same, in the great work with young people which our loving Lord has committed to his care.

And it is well for his scholars to know how earnestly he desires that they should be Christian citizens, full of good works; and that no difficulties can prevent him from going forward and doing his best.

And it will be a comfort for him to note that the bonds and afflictions which Paul foresaw proved to be the best means of his attaining his purpose of preaching the Gospel in Rome, the capital and centre of the then world.

Third. Exhortation, vs. 25–31. Realizing that the Ephesian Church would probably never see his face again, Paul calls them to witness this day of his departure, that **I am pure from the blood of all men.** He had done all within his power for the city and the church, so that if any failed of being true Christians, of eternal life here and hereafter, the blame rests on themselves and not on Paul. **I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God.** (Am. R.)

Paul derived this language from the well known words of Ezekiel, "When I say unto the wicked, They shall surely die; *and thou givest him not warning*, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but *his blood will I require at thine hand*" (Ezek. 3 : 18).

28. **Take heed therefore unto yourselves.** See that you are fit instruments for the work God has given you to do, and set an example that aids your work. Take heed to your intellectual life, to your spiritual life, and to your bodily life that your body may be the most perfect instrument of the spirit. For what you are, that is your greatest power for helping others. "While books can teach, personality only can educate."

And to all the flock, the church, the disciples, who are like a flock of sheep to be guarded from danger, folded and fed, guided into green pastures by still waters. Note the word ALL, to the poorest, the weakest, the erring, the neglected, the disagreeable; and especially to the lambs of the flock. That church accomplishes most which looks best after the children.

Made you overseers. Am. R., "bishops," superintendents, those charged with the duty of seeing what things ought to be done, and superintending the doing thereof. It is the king's (Christ is our king) office to rule. The bishop's office is to *oversee* the flock, to number it sheep by sheep, to be ready always to give full account of it.

Mr. Ruskin in his *Sesame and Lilies*, commenting on the strange phrase, "blind mouths" in Milton's *Lycidas*, says "those two monosyllables express the precisely accurate contraries of right character in the two great offices of the church — those of bishop and pastor. A bishop means a person who sees; a pastor means one who feeds. The most unbishoply character a man can have is, therefore, to be blind; the most unpastoral is, instead of feeding, to want to be fed. Nearly all the evils in the church have arisen from bishops desiring *power* more than *light*." Read the whole of what Ruskin says on this subject.

The Church of God (Am. R., "the Lord") **which he hath purchased with his own blood**, the blood of Christ, the costliest price that could be given, the love that is willing to die to save sinners. Nothing can so show the intensity of God's love for his people as does this fact of the infinite cost to him of their redemption. "God *so* loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." It was well for these elders to take heed to the church which was so precious to God.

29. **Grievous wolves**, the most dangerous enemies of the sheep, **shall enter in among you**, men of bad lives, of false teachings, seeking selfish interests no matter how many were injured. The greatest dangers often arise from those within the church, as the tallest and rankest weeds grow in the richest gardens. **Speaking perverse**

things, *distorted, twisted, distorted throughout.* Truths distorted from their true meaning, as objects are in an imperfect or curved mirror ; caricatures of truth. The most dangerous errors are truths distorted and perverted ; truth enough to make some believe them, and error enough to injure or ruin those who do believe. Few are caught with the bare hook of error or falsehood.

Teachers: " We shall never get beyond the fundamental necessity of having in our schools officers and teachers who, to put it in the plainest and simplest terms, really *care* enough what they are doing, to be willing to do hard, conscientious work, in order that they may do it well ; and, more than this, care enough personally for their pupils to give them that priceless gift of self." — *Herbert W. Gates*, Director of the Brick Church Institute, Rochester, N.Y.

Fourth. Commendation, vs. 32–35. Paul reminds the elders of his own example. He does not ask them to do any more than he himself has done. **And now . . . I commend you to God**, commit you to his care ; **and to the word of his grace**, his loving, joy giving favor, expressed in his word abounding in promises fulfilled in the past, and ready for the future. **Which is able to build you up** upon the foundation of Jesus Christ, like a temple, costly, beautiful, lighted, filled with worship and love. The whole church was to be built up in numbers and in graces, in truth and in good works, till they became fitting temples of the Holy Ghost.

And give you an (Am R., " the ") **inheritance among all them which are sanctified**, made pure and holy. The inheritance of the saints, contains all the good God can bestow and man receive, present and future. They are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

33. **I have coveted no man's silver.** I have sought you, not yours. 34. **These hands have ministered to my necessities.** I have avoided every thing that would give the impression that I had some selfish motive in doing and suffering so much for you. 35. **In all things I gave you an example** (Am. R.) of laboring in honest daily toil so that you may be able **to support** (Am. R., "help") **the weak.** The Greek word for " support " is an interesting compound word meaning *to take hold*, on one side, of the burden which the weak are lifting on the other side.

Paul parting with the Elders at Miletus.

No Christian should do business or his daily work chiefly for himself, but in order that he may support those dependent on him, and may give to the poor, and spread the gospel of our Lord. It is this which transfigures daily toil, as the sun transfigures fogs into sunset glories. It makes the commonest work noble.

A new saying of Christ

——It is more blessed to give than to receive——

Here we have a word of Christ rescued from sinking into oblivion ; a word of Christ with a word of Paul wrapped around it ; the jewel and its setting. (1) It brings greater happiness, more intense. (2) It produces a higher quality of happiness. (3) It is the mark of a nobler character. (4) It is the blessedness of God, who is the Great Giver. (5) It is the blessedness of Christ, who " came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." (6) It is the blessedness of heaven, where the inhabitants are ministering spirits. (7) It is the blessedness of the Christian religion, which is founded

on love, and lives in loving and giving. (8) It is a blessedness that endures, not like a glass of water, but like a fountain; not like a tune, but like the instrument that sends forth music. See Lesson VII, page 236.

The Farewell (vs. 36–38) was a most touching scene.

36. Paul poured forth his heart in prayer for them.

37. The elders **fell on Paul's neck and kissed him.** The Greek here is a compound word, meaning that they "showered kisses upon him," "kissed him over and over again." The same word is used in the father's welcome of his prodigal son.

38. That they should see his face no more.

"Say not Good Night, but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good Morning."

Blessed is the teacher who has done so much for his scholars, and has won such love from them.

LESSON X. — September 3.

PAUL'S SORROWS AND COMFORTS. — 2 Cor. 11:21–12:10.

PAUL THE HERO.

PRINT 2 Cor. 11:21-33. COMMIT vs. 25, 26.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *My grace is sufficient for thee; for my power is made perfect in weakness.* — 2 Cor. 12:9.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

I know of no book that will interest and help the boys and the girls in reaching the heart of this lesson on Paul's heroism, as Mrs. Ewing's "Story of a Short Life," from which quotations will be made. It would be well for each teacher to read this short story as a preparation for teaching this lesson with enthusiasm and power.

LEARN BY HEART.

2 Cor. 4:8–10; Rev. 7:13, 14.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

This letter was written from Macedonia, probably from Philippi, to the Corinthian Church after Titus had returned from Corinth with the news that there were those who had spoken unkind and unjust words about Paul, trying to injure him and his influence.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The reasons for Paul's defending himself.
Paul's heroism.
What is the difference between his heroism and that of soldiers in battle?
Is it necessary to have wars in order to cultivate heroism in man?
Professor James on the moral equivalent of training people to war.
Which is the higher, moral or physical courage?
Does the urging people to fight against sin, temptation, and the evils of the world tend to uphold the warlike spirit?
The advantage of visions and revelations from God.
Paul's thorn in the flesh, and God's treatment of it.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: St. Paul the Hero.

I. The Occasion for Paul's Defence of Himself.
II. Paul the Hero, Vindicates Himself from False Charges, 11:21–33.
III. God's Sustaining Grace in all Paul's Trials and Sufferings, and in Enabling Him to Accomplish His almost Impossible Task, 12:1–10.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Mrs. Ewing's *Story of a Short Life* (London Soc. for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Little, Brown & Co.). Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship. Early Christian Martyrs* in the *Temple Series of Bible Characters. Hero Tales*, by Mrs. Grace T. Davis, wife of President Ozora Davis (Pilgrim Press). *The Book of Golden Deeds* of all times and all lands, by the author of *The Heir of Redcliffe* (Lothrop, Boston). Prof. William James

on "The Moral Equivalent for War" in his *Memories and Studies* (1911, Longmans, Green, & Co.).

On Paul's thorn in the flesh, see Professor Ramsay's *St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 94, etc., and his *Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day*, ch. 49. Farrar's *St. Paul*.

21. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.

22. Are they Hebrews? so *am* I. Are they Israelites? so *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so *am* I.

23. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool,) I *am* more: in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent in deaths oft.

I. **THE OCCASION FOR PAUL'S DEFENDING HIMSELF.** Paul, having heard certain whispers of the condition of affairs in Corinth, sent Titus to investigate and report the exact facts. The Church in Corinth was very young, not seven years old, and Paul had been with them only a year and six months. Since then the church had grown in numbers, but while gaining strength and many virtues — although living in an atmosphere of intense worldliness and the moral malaria of heathenism — yet Titus had to report that there were certain difficulties and dangerous errors among them.

One of these was that the church was divided into several rival parties, some of whom made false charges against Paul, with taunts and insinuations against his character and work and authority as an apostle. These were so severe, so unjust, so injurious to the cause of Christianity, that Paul, very reluctantly, decided to refute them.

"Conceive all these barbed arrows of sarcasm falling on the ears, and through them piercing the very soul, of a man of singularly sensitive nature, passionately craving for affection, and proportionately feeling the bitterness of loving with no adequate return (2 Cor. 12:15), and we may form some estimate of the whirl and storm of emotion in which St. Paul began to dictate the epistle on which we are about to enter." — *Prof. E. H. Plumptre.*

II. **PAUL THE HERO. HE VINDICATES HIMSELF FROM THESE FALSE CHARGES**, 11:21–33. Paul hates to do this. He feels that it is unworthy of himself, but there is no other way than to tell the story of what he has done and suffered for the Cause of Christ, revealing to them many of his personal experiences which they did not know, nor could know unless he told them. He tells them his story, because only so can he retain his power to serve the church, and because the essential truths of the Gospel are at stake. For the sake of these he is willing to *seem* to be boasting, to seem to be doing a foolish thing in their eyes.

The Story of Paul's Sufferings for the Salvation of Mankind. **21.** Speaking of those who claimed to be the real leaders and apostles, and who condemned him, Paul says:

I speak as concerning reproach (Am. R., "I speak by way of disparagement").

22. Are they Hebrews, of purest blood, one of the nation and language?

So am I.

Are they Israelites, of the true religion, worshipping the one God?

So am I.

Are they the seed of Abraham, inheritors of the promises, of the Messianic hopes, and the kingdom of God?

So am I.

23. Are they ministers of Christ, of the Messiah, seeking to bring all men into his kingdom? **I speak as a fool** (Am. R., "I speak as one beside himself").

I am more. What have these others done for his cause compared with what I have done? Here is the test.

In labours more abundant. In a larger field, with greater results.

In stripes above measure. Those inflicted by the heathen, who were not limited to forty blows as were the Jews, besides the other beatings referred to in this list. Paul bore about in his body "the marks of the Lord Jesus."

In prisons more frequent. Only one that took place before this is mentioned, in Acts 16:23.

In deaths oft, frequently exposed to death, when stoned at Lystra, and when exposed to perils of robbers and of the sea.

24. Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one.
25. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;
26. *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren;

Roman Scourges.

The Roman scourge was sometimes tipped with sharp bits of metal on small cords.

24. Five times received I forty stripes save one from the Jews. None are mentioned in the Acts. The Jews were forbidden to inflict more than forty stripes (Deut. 25 : 3), and lest they should break the law by a mistake in counting they inflicted only thirty-nine.

25. Thrice was I beaten with rods. Once mentioned in Acts 16 : 22, 23. A similar instance is given by Cicero Against Verres, V : 62.

Once was I stoned. At Lystra (Acts 14 : 19). Stoning was planned once before at Iconium, but the plan was not carried out (Acts 14 : 5).

Thrice I suffered shipwreck. None recorded in Acts. The shipwreck on the way to Rome was later.

A night and a day I have been in the deep. Not recorded in Acts. "Night and a day" are expressed by a single word in the Greek, which means twenty-four hours. He must have been on some plank or piece of the wreck.

26. In journeyings often, during which he suffered from the following perils, as well as from the weariness and discomforts of hard travel, often on foot in uncivilized regions.

In perils of waters. Literally, as in Am. R., "rivers." Bridges were rare, and sudden floods frequent. Two of my young friends, young men of education and wealthy families, who went as missionaries, were drowned, one in India and the other in China together with his companion.

In perils of robbers. Every road in Asia Minor, then, as now, was infested with robbers. So it is in parts of Turkey where Paul travelled. Miss Ellen Stone and Mrs. Tsilka, for whose ransom $60,000 were paid, is a modern instance.

In perils by mine own countrymen. These were not the least among Paul's dangers. See Acts 9 : 23, 29; 13 : 50; 14 : 5, 19; 17 : 5, 13; 18 : 12. And others later in his career.

Perils by the heathen, Am. R., "Gentiles." Throughout most of his travels. See Acts 16 : 19–39; 19 : 23–34.

It was in view of such perils as these that Mark left Paul as they entered Asia Minor.

Perils in the city. In almost every city where he preached, as Jerusalem, Lystra, Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus. The Corinthians had seen him in some of these perils.

Perils in the wilderness. Most probably the wild, thinly peopled regions in Galatia and other parts of Asia Minor.

Perils in the sea. From storms, rocks, pirates, Scylla and Charybdis, and the quicksands.

Perils among false brethren. Judaizing teachers, and those who were self-seeking instead of making the gospel first. Compare Gal. 2 : 4; 2 Cor. 11 : 13.

27. In weariness and painfulness, Am. R., "in labor and travail." These and the following were connected with all that went before, making them more intense and virulent.

In watchings often, "in sleeplessness," in repeated nights of sleeplessness from anxiety or pain. Compare the midnight Psalms at Philippi (Acts 16 : 25); the dis-

27. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

29. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

30. If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

31. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

32. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me;

33. And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

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course all through the night at Troas (Acts 20 : 7–11); the ministrations "night and day" at Ephesus (Acts 20 : 31); the working to support himself night and day at Thessalonica (2 Thes. 3 : 8).

In hunger and thirst, in fastings often. Fastings through want of necessary food — not hunger only, but hunger unsatisfied for a long time.

In cold and nakedness. As in his shipwrecks, or in his journeys over the high land and mountain passes of Cilicia, badly shod and badly clothed.

28. Besides those things that are without. Left out of my story, innumerable other trials of all degrees and kinds too numerous to mention.

The care (Am R. "anxiety") **of all the churches,** daily, never intermitted. He was anxious for them that they be worthy of Jesus Christ. He loved them. He sympathized with all their trials, their poverty, their difficulties, bearing the burdens of each on his heart.

32, 33. In a basket was I let down by the wall. The early indignity and narrow escape at Damascus recurs to him, for it was his first persecution and suffering for Jesus' sake, "an instance of the indignities suffered by one, who, it is said, was sensitively alive to ridicule." It was a peculiarly trying and repulsive experience for such a brave man as Paul to run away from danger at all, but especially in such a sneaking way. It was probably forced upon him.

Paul let down in a Basket.

The story of these sufferings for the sake of saving men from sin and ruin proves Paul to have been one of the greatest heroes in all history.

MODERN LESSONS FROM THE HEROISM OF PAUL. *A Hero* "is a man of distinguished valor, intrepidity and enterprise in danger; one who exhibits extraordinary courage, firmness and fortitude in any course of action." — *Century Dictionary.* Its essence is the free giving of one's self for the good of a cause or person, at some real cost of sacrifice and danger. The ideal of heroism was Christ's voluntary sacrifice of himself on the cross, when at any time he could have had "twelve legions of angels" to rescue him (Matt. 26 : 53), — but it would have been at the cost of the

human race he came to save. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life. . . . No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." (John 10 : 17, 18.)

Paul was a hero because he voluntarily chose to endure all those persecutions and dangers of which we have read, in order to save the people to eternal life, and spread abroad the everlasting Gospel. And to do this was harder and more heroic than going into battle ; for in all these dangers and obloquy and suffering there were no cheers, no "on to victory," no shouts of applause from admiring crowds, to sustain him ; no enthusiasm of battle activity engaging every power of body and mind that enables the warrior to go into battle with enthusiastic joy.

The Development of Heroism by War. There has been a strong feeling in certain circles, which has not yet died out, that war is essential to the culture of the heroic qualities. "A modern philosopher, Mr. J. S. Mill, has said that Christ, in giving such instructions as the Sermon on the Mount, had done wonders for the ideal of humility and charity in the world, but had failed to inculcate manliness and that courage which was so amply developed by the laws of mediæval chivalry. Mill thought, therefore, that the Christian ideal was one-sided, and required to be supplemented by the warlike type, which resents insult, and challenges the aggressor to defend himself."

The military virtues are heroism, courage, honor, manliness, chivalry, patriotism, self-sacrifice, fortitude, quick obedience, discipline, duty at every cost, and the like. But with these there always arise great evils, murder, selfishness, brutality, cruelty, rapine, injury to others, all contrary to Christianity.

Development of all the military virtues by peace ; and these without the accompanying evils. "There is nothing good or glorious which war has brought forth in human nature," said Phillips Brooks once, "which peace may not produce more richly and more permanently. When peace and not war is the type and glory of existence, then shall shine forth the higher soldiership of the higher battles. Then the first military spirit and its works shall seem to be but crude struggles after, and rehearsals for, that higher fight, the fight after eternal facts and their obedience, the fight against the perpetually intrusive lie, which is the richer glory of the riper man."

The Moral Equivalent of War is the title of an Essay by the late Prof. William James of Harvard. All that War can do can be accomplished in Peace. There are more manly, heroic deeds done in the common daily life, than in the brief periods of fighting, even in military nations. Reformers, missionaries, opposers of evil customs and of wrongs in business, of graft in great cities, wrongs to children, and a multitude of other wrongs by wicked, selfish men in Christian lands — to conquer these require as much manliness, courage, and endurance, as to engage in a battle. Carnegie's Hero Commission, with its fund of five million dollars, has abundant opportunity to distribute its medals and rewards.

We are not all called to be martyrs, but all are called to have the martyr spirit, to be ready to suffer for the Lord and the coming of his kingdom. And all have opportunity to work out this spirit in the little things and the great things of daily life. There are many martyrs not known to history, but whose names are recorded in heaven.

"These, though their names appear not on the scroll
Of martyrologists, laid down their life —
Not less a martyrdom in Jesus' eyes —
For his dear brethren's sake, watching the couch
Of loathsome sickness, or of slow decay,
"Or visiting the captive in his cell,
Or struggling with a burden not their own
Until their very life-strings wore away —
These, too, are martyrs, brother."
— *Bickersteth.*

"But the one feature which stands out prominently in the society founded by Christ and his apostles is the extraordinary heroism which was shown in the face of death and tortures, not only by men, but by feeble women and tender children. It amazed the heathen magistrates, who were striving after fortitude by the aid of philosophy. It amazed the wild savages, who mistook gentleness for cowardice, when they found that it was harder to terrify the missionary who came with the gospel than the invader who came in battle array. Quiet endurance may be more heroic than violent resistance, and the Christian law of bearing personal insults and injuries meekly tends to the development of the highest courage and of the truest manliness. There is nothing more courageous, more heroic in all history, than the living up to this precept." — *Professor Mahaffy* in *S. S. Times.*

The fight against temptation without and within is one of the greatest battles ever fought, for in it we fight not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and

powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world ; and it needs all the power of the Holy Spirit, and the leadership of Jesus, and all faith and loyalty to Him in order to gain the victory.

"When the fight begins within himself
A man's worth something. God stoops over his head,
Satan looks up between his feet — both tug —
The soul wakes and grows."

"Was the trial sore? temptations sharp?
Thank God a second time."

Tennyson in his *In Memoriam* cries out with all the intensity of his being:

"Arise, and fly
The reeling faun, the sensual feast;
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die."

For we can say with Browning :

"I am heir, and this my kingdom;
Shall the royal voice be mute?
Hold the sceptre, Human soul,
And rule thy province of the brute."

When this great battle against sin begins, then there is hope, **then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.**

The greatest war in all history is that of Good overcoming Evil, with Jesus Christ as leader, with the transforming of the world into the kingdom of heaven, with truth, and love and righteousness, the Gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit and the Word of God ; with a list of heroes so great and so long that all the heroes of physical war grow dim in its presence.

The Boy that Wanted to be a Soldier. I know of no story so attractive and helpful to boys, as Mrs. Ewing's fascinating *Story of a Short Life.* This little boy brought up in a home with a soldier history, and a soldier atmosphere, felt his whole soul burning to be a soldier hero like his ancestors. An accident made him a cripple with a broken back, and constant pain. He gradually came to see that his only opportunity was to have the hero spirit, the soldier spirit. The following quotation will give the ideal of this little book. He is speaking to a young soldier who by his bravery had won the Victoria cross.

" Now should you think that if I am very good and not cross about a lot of pain in my back and my head — really a good lot — that that would count up to be as brave as having one wound if I'd been a soldier ? "

" Certainly."

" Mother says it would, and I think it might. Not a very big wound, of course, but a poke with a spear, or something of that sort. It *is* very bad sometimes, particularly when it keeps you awake at night."

" My little friend, *that* would count for lying out all night wounded on the field when the battle's over. Soldiers are not always fighting."

" Did you ever lie out for a night on a battle-field ? "

" Yes, once."

" Did the night seem very long ? "

" Very long ; and we were very thirsty."

" So am I sometimes, but I have barley-water and lemons by my bed, and jelly, and lots of things. You'd no barley-water, had you ? "

" No."

" Nothing ? "

" Nothing till the rain fell, then we sucked our clothes."

" It would take a lot of my bad nights to count up to that ! But I think when I'm ill in bed I might count that like being a soldier in hospital ? "

" Of course."

" I thought — no matter how good I got to be — nothing could ever count up to be as brave as a real battle, leading your men on and fighting for your country, though you know you may be killed any minute. But Mother says, if I *could* try very hard, and think of poor Jemima as well as myself, and keep brave in spite of feeling miserable, that then (particularly as I shan't be very long before I do die) it would be as good as if I'd lived to be as old as Uncle Rupert, and fought bravely when the battle was against me, and cheered on my men, though I knew I could never come out

of it alive. Do you think it *could* count up to that? *Do you?* Oh, do answer me, and don't stroke my head! I get so impatient. You've been in battles — do you?"

"I do, I do."

"You're a V. C., and you ought to know. I suppose nothing — not even if I could be good always, from this minute right away till I die — nothing could ever count up to the courage of a V. C.?"

"God knows it could, a thousand times over!"

III. **GOD'S SUSTAINING GRACE, IN ALL PAUL'S TRIALS AND SUFFERINGS; AND IN ENABLING HIM TO ACCOMPLISH HIS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TASK**, 12 : 1–10. V. 1 reads in Am. R., "I must needs glory, though it is not expedient." God had given to Paul one of the greatest tasks ever committed to man, — the planting of the Gospel in heathen lands, founding churches, teaching them the Gospel truths of Jesus Christ. He wrote to these churches two-fifths of the New Testament, 13 of its 27 books. And this work was accomplished under great difficulties, trials and sufferings.

To sustain and guide him into the gospel truths, the Lord gave him **visions and revelations** (v. 1). These came to him from the very beginning of his Christian life, and continued in different crises through his whole course. The first was at his conversion 20 years before this letter was written, when he saw Jesus in his glory.

Again, vs. 2–4, he (= the man he knew. Am. R., "knows") 14 years before (about A.D. 43, when he was at Antioch, where he first entered on his foreign missionary work), **was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words.** He obtained his teachings and his gospel facts directly from the Lord. Several times he had visions that sustained him in his sufferings and trials.

Paul declares (Gal. 1 : 11, 12):

"I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

"For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Something of this vision, of this communion of God with our spirits, of this realization of heaven and its life, of this insight into spiritual truths, is necessary to our best usefulness, and our highest life.

"O Master, it is good to be
Entranced, enwrapt, alone with thee;
Till we, too, change from grace to grace,
Gazing on that transfigured face." — *A. P. Stanley.*

"We cannot kindle when we will
The fire that in the heart resides;
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides;
But tasks in hours of insight willed
May be through hours of gloom fulfilled."
— *Matthew Arnold.*

The visions and revelations are intended to help us to perform better our daily duties, and to sustain us in our trials.

Dwight L. Moody's Illustration. "I heard once of a man who dreamed that he was swept into heaven and he was there in the glory world, and oh, he was so delighted to think that he had at last made heaven, that he had got there. And all at once one came and said, 'Come, I want to show you something.' And he took him to the battlements and he said, 'Look down yonder; what do you see?' 'I see a very dark world.' 'Look and see if you know it.' 'Why, yes,' he said, 'that is the world I have come from.' 'What do you see?' 'Why, men are blindfolded there; many of them are going over a precipice.' 'Well, will you stay here and enjoy heaven, or will you go back to earth and spend a little longer time, and tell those men about this world?' He was a worker who had been discouraged. He awoke from his sleep and said, 'I have never wished myself dead since.'"

Paul's Thorn in the Flesh, 12 : 7–10. The thorn in the flesh was of the nature of a discipline, **lest I should be exalted above measure.** "St. Paul's trial is compared to the vexatious irritation of a thorn. A plausible conjecture is that the apostle suffered from *Ophthalmia*, a very common disease in the East (see Farrar's *St. Paul*). Professor Ramsay thinks it was chronic malarial fever (*St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 94 ff.). Whatever his infirmity was, it apparently affected the dignity of his outward appearance." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* We probably have a hint of it in 2 Cor. 10 : 1, 10; where he seems to acknowledge (v. 1) that there is some truth in what his enemies say, "His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."

Illustration from Plato. One can easily imagine how Socrates, whom Plato compared to the gallipots of the Athenian apothecaries, on the outside of which were painted grotesque figures of apes and owls, but which contained within precious

medicines and confections, walking in the streets of Athens with " his thick lips, snub nose, corpulent body, and personal ugliness," scolded by his wife at home, with all the marks of poverty as he walked in mean dress and bare feet in the public streets and workshops, wearing as it were the Thersites mask of ugliness, — how this man who was to march down the centuries the foremost man of Greece, would feel that his personal appearance was " a thorn in his flesh " that hindered his usefulness and lessened his power.

Paul Prayed that the thorn in his flesh might be taken away. He prayed till an answer came.

The Answer to Paul's Prayer was not by taking away the thorn, but by giving him grace to bear it, and by making what seemed to be a hindrance the means of a greater blessing than could otherwise be his.

"Pray, yet I do not tell you
The hour you long for now
Will not come with its radiance vanished
And a shadow upon its brow;

"Yet far through the misty future,
With a crown of starry light,
An hour of joy you know not
Is winging her silent flight."

LESSON XI. — September 10.

THE ARREST OF PAUL. — Acts 21:17–40.

PRINT vs. 27–40. COMMIT vs. 31, 32.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.* — ACTS 22:15.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Mr. Herbert W. Gates in an address before the Religious Education Association, speaking of our modern Sunday school problems, said, " We have had much to say about the necessity of training our pupils in service, of preparing them for life by living, and so on. But it seems to me that most of us have been limiting the possibilities along this line by confining our thought too closely to the kinds and types of service which the pupil may render within the limits of his church life, and we have overlooked altogether too largely the many opportunities that are presented by the pupil's everyday life, in his normal environment of home, school, play, and work, for the cultivation of just what we are really seeking. We need to bring to the attention of teachers the duty of teaching their pupils how to apply in this everyday life, and in this common round of living, those principles that will make them Christians in the true sense of the word, the expressional activities that are natural in each period and which may be utilized in the development of Christian character."

Let us try in this lesson to make such applications of its truths.

Trace Paul's journey on the map.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 13, 14; Deut. 31:6.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The warnings of Paul's friends against his going to Jerusalem.
Why Paul insisted that it was his duty to go to Jerusalem at any cost.
Woman's work in the church as illustrated by Philip's four daughters.
Paul's reception at Jerusalem.
Slanders and misconceptions concerning Paul's teachings to the Gentiles.
Was the plan proposed for refuting the slanders a wise one?
The mob in the Temple Court.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Paul's Journey to Jerusalem, with the dates according to Professor Ramsay.

A.D. 57.

THE PASSOVER		Thursday, April 7.
Left Philippi		Friday, April 15.
Arrived at Miletus	4 days	Thursday, April 28.
Left Miletus		Sunday morning, May 1.
Arrived at Coos		Sunday evening, May 1.
Arrived at Rhodes		Monday, May 2.
Arrived at Patara		Tuesday, May 3.
Arrived at Tyre	7 days	Saturday, May 7.
Departed from Tyre		Friday, May 13.
Arrived at Ptolemais		Friday, May 13.
Arrived at Cæsarea	10 days	Saturday, May 14.
Departed from Cæsarea		Wednesday, May 25.
By land to Jerusalem		Friday, May 27.
FEAST OF PENTECOST		Saturday, May 28.

The Journey from Miletus occupied about four weeks.

Time of the Arrest. — June 3, A.D. 57, about 8 days after the arrival at Jerusalem.

The principal places where stops were made, were Tyre, Cæsarea, and Jerusa-

lem, completing Paul's third missionary journey.

Paul's companions were the seven delegates from the churches, Luke from Philippi, and Mnason from Cæsarea.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The *books* and *Commentaries* referred to in Lesson 9.

Picture.

St. Paul Rescued from the Multitude, by Doré.*

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Stirring Scenes in the Life of Paul; and What they Teach us.

I. PAUL'S EXPERIENCES ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, VS. 1–16.

II. PAUL'S WELCOME BY THE JERUSALEM CHURCH, VS. 17–19.

III. SLANDERS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS; AND THE PLAN TO REFUTE THEM, VS. 20–26.

IV. PAUL MOBBED IN THE TEMPLE COURTS. RESCUED BY THE ROMAN AUTHORITIES, VS. 27–40.

I. PAUL'S EXPERIENCES ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, 21 : 1–16. Trace on the map the course of Paul's journey.

In Lesson 9 we left Paul about to depart from Miletus on the Ægean Sea, in a coasting vessel with frequent stops to deliver cargo, or to take it.

Cō'ŏs or Cŏs was the first stopping place, 40 miles south of Miletus. It was the seat of the famous Medical School of Esculapius.

Rhodes = Rose, 50 miles further S., was reached the next day, "the sunny island of roses," famous for the "Colossus of Rhodes," one of "the seven wonders of the world, a colossal figure of brass at the head of the harbor, and over one hundred feet high, so that vessels sailed between its legs." But at the time of Paul's visit it lay in ruins, having been destroyed by an earthquake.

Patara, the seaport of the province of Lycia, where was a famous oracle of Apollo almost as renowned as Delphi in Greece. Here Paul and his companions changed into another ship, that was going to Palestine.

Border of Tyre.

Tyre is the next seaport mentioned in Paul's voyage. It was about 350 miles east of Patara. Tyre had been "one of the greatest and most famous cities of the Ancient World." There were many Jewish associations with Tyre.

Hiram, the king of Tyre, aided Solomon in building the temple (1 Kings 9), B.C. 1000.

Ahab, king of Israel, married Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of Tyre and Sidon (1 Kings 16 : 31).

Several prophets prophesied about Tyre (Amos 1 : 9, 10; Isa. 23; Ezek. 26–28).

Tyrian purple, extracted from shell-fish, was widely celebrated.

Christ visited Tyre or vicinity (Matt. 15 : 21; Mark 7 : 24).

Ezekiel, about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar B.C. 586, uttered a terrible prophecy against Tyre (Ezek. 26 : 3–5). The old Tyre was destroyed, and a new Tyre built long before Paul's day.

When Alexander the Great besieged the city in 332 B.C., and Tyre held out against him, he scraped the very dust of old Tyre bare to the rock, in order to make a road from the mainland to the new city, as Ezekiel had prophesied two hundred and fifty years before.

Paul's Experience at Tyre. The delegation sought out the Christian disciples there, for they knew that such disciples were in Tyre, as the Greek implies, while the disciples of course did not know that Paul and his companions were coming or had arrived.

We tarried there seven days. The time spent at Tyre in unlading the vessel, and probably taking in a new cargo.

Who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem. There were not only disciples at Tyre, but prophets. There is no contradiction between this statement, also repeated at Cæsarea, and St. Paul's assertion that he was going to Jerusalem under divine guidance. The Spirit revealed to them that if Paul went to Jerusalem he would be in great danger, and they drew the inference that he ought not to go. They felt that Paul ought to preserve his life for the sake of future usefulness. "Paul knew, however, that such was not the intention of the message. The Spirit was not forbidding him, but only testing him." — *Ramsay.* He knew that he had a great work to do in Jerusalem, and he must do it. He only could do it. (See Lesson 9.)

Paul's Experience at Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Palestine, and the official residence of the Herodian kings and the governors of Judea. It was built by Herod the Great, and named after Cæsar.

Here lived the Roman centurion who was led to Christ by Peter.

Here were the headquarters of Philip the evangelist, *i.e.* the herald of the good tidings of Jesus the Christ. He was one of the seven deacons appointed by the early church in Jerusalem. With him were his four maiden daughters, who prophesied, "interpreted the divine Message," spoke or preached, or taught in whatever womanly way was possible..

The records of the New Testament simply show the fact that God inspires women as well as men, and when he sends them forth they have a mission to proclaim the gospel in their own womanly way.

Here again Paul was warned against going on to Jerusalem. A prophet named Agabus came to Cæsarea and taking Paul's girdle bound his own hands and feet with it, and warned Paul that so he should be bound by the Jews at Jerusalem. "It was needful that he should understand well what awaited him : it was needful for the success of his work that all the churches of the outer world should realize clearly what dangers he was facing while he followed the path of duty. Hence these repeated warnings." The disciples at Cæsarea and Paul's own companions plead with him not to go. But Paul knew better his own duty, and answered, **What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.**

From an old print. Artist unknown.

The Prophecy of Agabus.

"He saw a hand they could not see
Which beckoned him away,
He heard a voice they could not hear
Which would not let him stay."

To Jerusalem. It is uncertain how long Paul and his companions remained at Cæsarea, but after a prayer meeting with the disciples, they set out to go to Jerusalem, 64 miles, in time for the day of Pentecost. Professor Ramsay is sure that Paul and the others went on horseback, since the Greek word in verse 15 implies "We, having equipped *horses*, proceeded," etc.

"Moreover Paul was accompanied by his physician (Luke), who knew that Paul, subject as he was to attacks of illness, and constantly exposed to great mental and emotional strains, *must* not begin his work in Jerusalem by a hurried walk of 64 miles." Ramsay also interprets v. 16 thus: And there went with us also some of the disciples from Cæsarea and these conducted us where we should find entertainment; and reaching a certain village, we were in the house of Mnason, an early disciple; and going out thence the next morning, Paul and his company performed the rest of his journey (which was probably not far) on foot.

Applications to Daily Life.

1. To whatever place you go, seek out first the intelligent Christian people; in the community, in the church, in the Sunday school. This is especially needed in going away to school, or to college, or seeking employment in a place unknown to you. It may make all the difference in the world to you.

2. Go on in the way of duty at any cost, in the face of any danger or difficulty. Every young person needs this heroic temper. Difficulties in the way of doing your duty are tests of character, of the manly and womanly qualities you need. And your whole future depends on how you stand these tests.

3. It is quite possible that women have not had their full share in the management of our churches. In the London (England) *Times* is found this paragraph: "The first church for women was opened yesterday at Wallasey. '*The Church of the New Ideal*,' as it is called, had its origin in the dissatisfaction with the conditions under which women do much Church work, but have little voice in the management. Sermons were preached yesterday by the Rev. Hatty Baker, of Plymouth, who declared that women's ideals and dreams would be realized, although they would have to endure persecution, laughter, and ridicule. The new church is officered entirely by women." The church for only women is as unfortunate as a church for only men. But the women might well have a larger share than they have had in the control.

II. **PAUL'S WELCOME BY THE JERUSALEM CHURCH**, vs. 17–19. Paul appears to have made his home with Mnason, because being outside of the crowd in the city, he would be less exposed to danger, and would find a more restful home.

The brethren received Paul and his companions with a hearty welcome. They must have recognized that these were distinguished persons, and have heard occasional reports of the man who brought the Gospel to so wide a range of cities.

This first interview was probably a private and personal greeting.

A Public Reception was given Paul and his friends on the next day, probably the day of Pentecost and so public that Christians from other lands could be present from the great numbers which thronged the Festival of Pentecost.

It was twenty years since Paul had left Jerusalem on his persecuting mission to Damascus, and had been transformed into an earnest Christian. Seven years since Paul had made a visit of several days, reporting the work accomplished during the first missionary journey, and obtaining the decree of the church in favor of welcoming the Gentiles. Once since then he had made a brief visit at the close of the second missionary journey. Much had taken place, many changes made, during those years.

The elders and leaders of the Jerusalem church presided at the meeting, of whom James the brother of our Lord was chief.

Paul's Report of his Work must have excited great interest, for it was a marvellous work, full of adventures, of triumph over obstacles that seemed insurmountable, of God's deliverance from dangers and death, and most of all the marvellous, miraculous work God had wrought through Paul of planting Christian churches in the moral darkness and heathenism of the great cities of Asia and Europe. No doubt he laid his emphasis on what God had wrought through him.

The Gifts Paul Brought from the Gentile Churches were doubtless presented at this time, as expressions of their love and gratitude to the mother church, which would greatly need this aid when so many Christians were present from distant lands to celebrate Pentecost. With these gifts Paul would prove the Christian character of the Gentile disciples, and would also use them as the means of accomplishing his plan and hope of a united Church of Christ.

The Leaders were broadminded enough to glorify the Lord for what had been accomplished.

III. **SLANDERS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS; AND THE PLAN THE LEADERS PROPOSED TO REFUTE THEM**, vs. 20–26. The Leaders of the Jerusalem church saw clearly that to accomplish Paul's statesmanlike plan and pur-

pose, something must be done to make clear that the false rumors as to Paul's teaching were proved false ; that he did not teach what false reports said he did.

The Slanders. The leaders recognized that there were **many thousands of Jews which believe.** They had come to the festival from various parts of the world. These Christian Jews who were **zealous of the law** declared :

1. That Paul taught **all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses.**
2. **That they ought not to circumcise their children.**
3. That they ought not **to walk after the customs** of Moses and the Jews.

The Facts were : (1) That Paul obeyed the Jewish ceremonial law personally, as a rite, as a matter of race, not as a condition of salvation. He did not forbid the Jews to do as he did. (2) He taught that the Gentiles need not become Jews, nor obey the Jewish ritual. (3) The law was not necessary for salvation for either Jew or Gentile. No forms could save any one, not even a Jew, but only faith in the Lord Jesus. (4) The promises to the Jews were to be fulfilled in those, both Jews and Gentiles, who, by faith, became true children of Abraham and heirs of the promises. His teachings brought to Jews and Gentiles the glorious liberty of the children of God. They made Christianity a universal religion. They made it possible for the promises to be fulfilled.

THE THREE GATES OF SILENCE

"If you are tempted to reveal
A tale some one has told
About another, make it pass,
Before you speak, three gates of gold:

"These narrow gates: First, 'Is it true?'
This, 'Is it needful?' In your mind
Give truthful answer. And the next
Is last and narrowest, 'Is it kind?'

"And if to reach your lips at last
It passes through these gateways three,
Then you may tell the tale, nor fear
What the result of speech may be." — *Beth Day.*

Dust on Your Glasses. I don't often put on my glasses to examine Katy's work ; but one morning not long ago I did so upon entering a room she had been sweeping.

" Did you forget to open the windows when you swept, Katy ? " I inquired. " This room is very dusty."

" I think there is dust on your eye-glasses, ma'am," she said, modestly.

And sure enough, the glasses were at fault and not Katy. I rubbed it off and everything was bright and clean. — *Selected.*

Edgar Allan Poe, in one of his weird stories, relates how a friend, lying on a lounge, saw through the window a huge and terrible monster coming swiftly down the mountain side toward the house. Looking at the same place the next day he found that it was only a small death's head moth crawling slowly down the window frame.

The Great Fear. The earthquake, which shook off the plastering which covered the beautiful paintings in the great church of Verona, may well have seemed to be destroying the church. So, also, when Paul taught that circumcision was not essential to salvation (Gal. 5 : 6 ; 6 : 15 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 18, 19), his teaching could easily be perverted, and the strict Jews felt that he was undermining the Jewish commonwealth, and striking a blow at the Bible and religion.

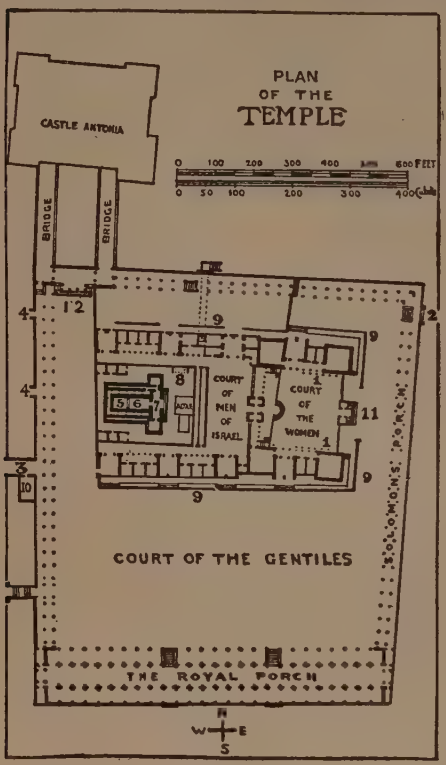
Why the Christian Jews were so opposed to Paul's position. 1. They indeed wanted the Gentiles to become Christians, but only by becoming Jews, for the Jews were the inheritors of all the promises of God, on which the very hope of the world depended. In the seed of Abraham their founder were all the nations to be blessed. The promises in Isaiah of glorious times for all the world were made to the faithful Jews. The Jewish religion was divine. Paul's position seemed to sweep away the inspired Scriptures. In their view " those who supported the cause of Paul rendered themselves liable to those charges, so terrible to a Jew, of laxness, of irreligion, of apostasy, of unpatriotism, of not being believers in revealed truth." They could not see how only by the truths Paul taught, and by this interpretation of their Scriptures could their hopes be realized and the promises to them be fulfilled. If Paul prevailed all was lost, they thought.

We now can see why even the Christian Jews were so intense in their opposition to Paul's teachings as a distorted view of those teachings had been presented to them.

The Proposed Plan for Refuting the Slanders was for Paul to prove openly by his conduct that they were distorted and not true ; that Paul was faithful as a Jew, to the Law and Testimony, and to the teachings of Moses.

27. And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,

The plan was that he should attach himself to a company of four Jews who had taken the Nazirite vow (Num. 6 : 9) and were about to complete it by making certain prescribed sacrifices, and ceremonies, which were costly, and occupied a period of seven days. Paul was to be with them, and pay the expenses, for the men were poor and had probably come from some distance.



Plan of Herod's Temple.

1. Thirteen trumpet-mouthed money boxes, on either side of the Court of the Women.
2. Shushan Gate, the still existing Golden Gate.
3. Gate with bridge across the Tyropean Valley to the street that led across the city to Jaffa Gate.
4. Gates to the commercial suburb.
5. Holy of Holies, containing the ark of the covenant.
6. Sanctuary, or Holy Place, containing candlestick, table, and altar of incense.
7. The porch.
8. The slaughter house for sacrifices.
9. The Soreg, or wall, shutting out all the Gentiles.
10. Council chamber of the Sanhedrin.
11. Gate Beautiful.
12. Steps to the Castle, and a portico, the scene of St. Paul's speech.

Paul accepted the plan, I imagine with considerable reluctance ; but he agreed to do it since his yielding to the plan implied no yielding of principle, and to refuse to make the concession would put an undue emphasis on the ritual of the Jews.

" Concession on little points has a wondrous power in smoothing the path of action and gaining true success. Many an honest man ruins a good cause simply because he cannot distinguish, as St. Paul did, things necessary and essential from things accidental and trivial." — *Stokes.* " In essentials, firmness ; in non-essentials, liberty."

It was necessary of course that Paul should often be seen in the courts of the temple with the four Nazirites, and participating in the ritual. " This was considered in itself a devout act, especially if the newcomer defrayed the cost of the sacrifices. Agrippa I., for instance, had in this way gained credit with the Jews, as showing his reverence for the law." — *Plumptre.* See Josephus' *Jewish Wars*, 2: 15, 1 ; *Antiquities*, 19: 6, 1.

But vows are apt to have " either wings or chains."

IV. **PAUL MOBBED IN THE TEMPLE COURT, AND RESCUED BY THE ROMAN AUTHORITIES**, vs. 27–40. The " Plan " was not a success in achieving the purpose the Christian elders had in mind, but it was a success in another way as one of the series of means by which Paul was to reach Rome as he desired.

While Paul was closely confined to the Temple courts, and especially in the court of the women where the Nazirite ritual, at least in part, was performed, and an apartment was appropriated for their use, some Jews, not believers, from Asia, probably from Ephesus its capital or vicinity, recognized Paul, for he must have become well-known during his public ministry there of almost three years.

Into the larger court of the Temple, the Court of the Gentiles, any one could enter. But into the Court of the Women. entered from the larger court by a flight of steps,

28. Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all *men* every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.

29. (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

30. And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

31. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar:

32. Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul.

33. Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded *him* to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done.

34. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.

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through the Gate Beautiful, none but Jews could go. "A balustrade of stone fenced off these more sacred enclosures. This was the middle wall of partition alluded to (Eph. 2 : 14). This was four and a half feet high, with small obelisks at regular distances, bearing inscriptions in Greek and Latin that no Gentile might enter on pain of death," even though he were a Roman citizen.

The unbelieving Jews from Ephesus had seen Paul frequently within this sacred enclosure during the seven days of the vow, and without doubt true Jews from foreign countries were there, and Paul conversed with them. They had also seen one of the Greek-speaking Ephesian Gentile Christians, named Trophimus, walking with Paul around the city. Putting these two facts together they imagined that Paul had brought this Greek Gentile within the forbidden court. Trophimus was one of the delegation accompanying Paul.

Immediately they stirred up all the multitude, and laid hands on Paul, crying out, **Men of Israel, help**. This cry aroused the whole Jewish crowd in the Temple courts. They could not tell whether the accusation was true or not. But the time (A.D. 57, 58) was only twelve years before the final destruction of Jerusalem, and in the unsettled period which led to that destruction, when the Jews had to be intensely watchful against the tendency to defile their temple with emperor worship. The nervous strain and excitement were like a coal mine filled with explosive gas, which a spark could explode.

They took (Am. R., "laid hold on") **Paul, and drew** (Am. R., "dragged") **him out of the temple**. The Jews laid violent hands on Paul, dragged him out of the court of the women, through the Gate Beautiful, the doors of which were immediately closed, then down the steps into the Court of the Gentiles, where they tried to kill him.

Tidings of the riot came to the ears of **the chief captain**, equivalent to our colonel, *i.e.* captain over a regiment of a thousand men; but regiments seldom have their full number. His name was Claudius Lysias (Acts 23 : 26). **Of the band.** A Roman *cohort*, the tenth part of a legion, or about six hundred men. This cohort formed the garrison of Castle Antonia, at the northwest corner of the temple area, so built as to overlook the temple and its courts. The castle was named after Mark Antony. The Fortress communicated with the Temple courts by means of two flights of steps.

Paul was **bound with two chains**, one from each of his arms to a soldier on each side of him (compare chap. 12 : 6). This secured the prisoner, yet left him free to walk away with his guards when the detachment was marched off. The prophecy of Agabus was here fulfilled.

"No sooner had he got on the stairs which led up to the top of the cloister, and so

35. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people.

36. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him.

37. And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek?

38. Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?

39. But Paul said, I am a man *which am* a Jew of Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.

40. And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto *them* in the Hebrew tongue, saying,

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into the fortress, than the mob, afraid that they were going to be baulked of their vengeance, made another rush at him, with yells of 'Kill him! kill him!' and Paul, unable in his fettered condition to steady himself, was carried off his legs, and hurried along in the arms of the surrounding soldiers." — *Farrar.*

37. **Paul . . . said** (in Greek, which the **chief captain** would understand, but not Hebrew), **May I speak unto thee? Canst thou speak Greek?** In surprise that he was not the ignorant brigand he supposed.

38. **Art not thou that Egyptian which . . . madest an uproar, and leddest . . . four thousand men that were murderers**, Am. R., "stirred up to sedition and led . . . the four thousand men of the Assassins" (Sicarii). The "Egyptian," whom the chief captain took St. Paul to be, is mentioned by Josephus. A short time before this, he had gathered a large body of discontented Jews on Mt. Olivet, whom he had deluded into the belief that he was the Messiah, declaring that the walls of Jerusalem would fall down at his word.

Paul told the captain who he was, and asked permission to speak to the rioters, hoping to quiet them with the simple facts; and permission was granted.

Practical. Disappointing the Enemy. "There is nothing so disconcerting to our enemies as a quiet self-control that refuses to show irritation or offense. When any one attacks us, for whatever cause, he confidently looks for some evidence from us that the attack has accomplished part of its purpose by arousing our anger. That is the very evidence that we need not give, and ought not to give. A well-known and sharp rule for successful trading has a worthier application in dealing with our own feelings at such a time: 'Find out what the other fellow wants you to do, and don't do it.'" — *S. S. Times.*

LESSON XII. — September 17.

PAUL A PRISONER IN THE CASTLE. — Acts 22.

PRINT vs. 17-29. COMMIT vs. 27-29.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in whom I trust.* — Ps. 91 : 2.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The lesson to-day repeats the story of Paul's conversion, and it will be wise to emphasize the value and necessity of a thorough conversion to Christ, as the foundation of every true life, of social service, and of patriotism, and the building up of righteousness in the whole nation. Without endorsing in any degree some of the methods and tenets of the evangelist Billy Sunday, it is still true that his essential message of repentance and a new heart lies at the basis of all

effective preaching and Sunday school teaching.

A leading official of Pittsburg bears this testimony: "'In all the 250 years of the existence of the city, this last eight weeks has been the time of epochal importance.' Billy Sunday's gospel might be derided by some as purely individual and utterly out-of-date in these days when the social obligation has so largely become the message of the church. But the wisdom of the New Testament message of personal guilt and personal salvation is witnessed by the amazing awakening to social responsibility on the part of his hearers. No series of up-to-date conventions on purely social topics would have produced a tithe of the social awakening that this plain call to repentance and godly living has achieved.

"Not only the common people — but the students of the universities. Did you see how at Columbia, a few weeks ago, 2000 men every night crowded the hall to hear John R. Mott on personal religion? How at Lafayette 220 men took a stand for Christ, including the captain, the manager and nine members of the football team, and the captain and manager and five members of the baseball nine."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Lessons from Paul's Conversion Experience.

Introduction.

I. PAUL'S EARLY LIFE AND TRAINING. BEFORE HIS CONVERSION. FROM WHAT HE WAS CONVERTED, VS. 3–5.

II. JESUS APPEARS TO PAUL NEAR DAMASCUS. HOW PAUL WAS CONVERTED, VS. 6–13.

III. TO THE CONVERTED PAUL IS MADE KNOWN HIS LIFE WORK. AFTER CONVERSION, WHAT? VS. 14–21.

IV. THE CLAMOR FOR PAUL'S DEATH, VS. 22, 23.

V. PAUL SAVED BY HIS ROMAN CITIZENSHIP, VS. 24–30.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — June 3, A.D. 57.

Immediately following the last lesson.

Period. — Ramsay says: Chapters 21 : 17 to 24 : 23 describe the events of 12 days, May 27 to June 7.

Place. — Paul's address to the Jews from the stairs that led from the Castle Antonia to the public court of the Temple.

LEARN BY HEART.

Acts 2 : 38, 39.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

What Paul's object was in desiring to speak to the Jews.

Why did he speak in Hebrew, when all doubtless could speak Greek?

Why did he tell the story of his conversion?

How did God choose Paul to be his foreign missionary?

What special fitness did he have?

The present need of preaching repentance and faith in Jesus.

The value to Paul and his work of his Roman citizenship.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The *books* and *Commentaries* lately referred to.

Besides these there are many *Lives of Paul* as those by Robert E. Speer, Farrar, Conybeare, and Howson, Stalker, Lyman Abbott, Gilbert, Taylor, Bird, Weed, Lewin, Cone, Iverach, Weinel, Baring-Gould, Fouard, Monod, etc. Most teachers will have one or more of these.

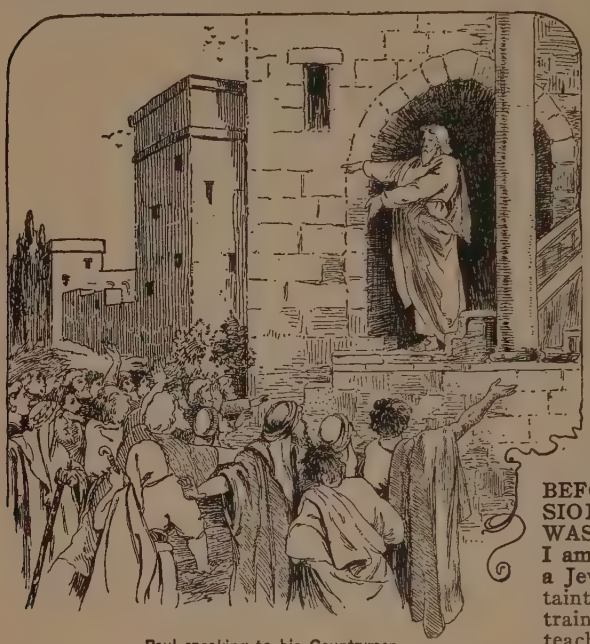
THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Victor Hugo's *Tempest in a Brain*. Newton's *Olney Hymns*, CXXI. *The Epic of Saul*, a poem by Prof. W. C. Wilkinson. *Poems* on the conversion of St. Paul by Keble (*The Christian Year*), Roscoe, and Dean Alford. "Paul," a poem by Samuel Johnson. Harold Begbie's *Twice-born Men*.

As we saw in our last lesson, Paul had been rescued from the mob in the Temple Court, and been brought by the Roman soldiers up the stairs toward the Castle Antonia. On some platform at the turning of the stairs Paul requested Claudius Lysias the chief captain that he might speak to his countrymen, in the hope of quieting their excitement by a plain statement of how he, who once was as fiery and intense as they in his opposition to Jesus being the Messiah of the Jews because he felt in his very soul that it contradicted their Scriptures and overthrew all their hopes as a nation, — how he had come to see that Jesus was the true Messiah, and the only hope of the nation.

"Paul's every word and act at this moment of supreme danger evince remarkable courage, coolness, and self-possession. His one thought now was to seize the occasion of speaking to the people, when he had a great crowd before him, with their attention

fixed on him. This might be an opportunity of bringing home the truth to them; and with the Tribune's permission, standing on the stairs he beckoned to the people and addressed them in the national tongue, Aramaic [a modified form of Hebrew with the same letters, the common language of the people, while the strict Hebrew was the literary form used in their Scriptures]. The use of the Semitic (Aramaic) speech instead of the Greek, which probably the whole audience understood, marked in itself his claim to be a true Hebrew. Paul was a good linguist: he could evidently speak with equal ease and power in Greek and Aramaic; he knew the ancient Hebrew of the Bible; and when he planned to visit Spain, he must have been confident that he could address the audiences of the cities there in Latin." — *Ramsay*.



Paul speaking to his Countrymen.

By this wise use of the Jewish language, he gained the silent attention of the excited crowd.

I. PAUL'S EARLY LIFE AND TRAINING. BEFORE HIS CONVERSION. FROM WHAT HE WAS CONVERTED, vs. 3–5. **I am verily a man which am a Jew**, one of their nation, untainted through inheritance or training by Gentile ancestors, teachings, and immoralities. "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee." (Phil. 3 : 4, 5.)

Born in Tarsus, the capital of the province of Cilicia in Asia Minor. It was no mean city (Acts 21 : 39). It "stood before the world at the entrance to the greatest province of the East as a metropolis, a free city with a free harbor, mistress of a large and fertile territory." — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary*. Its university rivalled those of Athens and Alexandria. It was governed largely by philosophers, some of the greatest of whom Paul probably heard. Paul was an educated man.

Yet brought up in this city, Jerusalem, from early boyhood, not later than when thirteen years old. **At the feet of Gamaliel**, that is, as a student under him. "The most usual position of teacher and pupils at the time of St. Paul was that both should sit, the former on a higher level than the latter." Gamaliel was "one of the most distinguished doctors of the Law, of his age"; and therefore Paul was **taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the Fathers**, and **touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless** (Phil. 3 : 6). He **was zealous toward** (Am R., "for") **God**, doing what he thought God would have him do, expressed by persecution of the Christians whom he thought to be destroying the Scriptures, and the safety of the nation.

4. **I persecuted this Way** with a capital W (as in Am. R.), — the Way to Salvation, the Way to forgiveness of sins, the Way to a righteous life, to heaven, to the safety of the Jewish Commonwealth. Jesus said, "I am the Way."

Paul at this time was an instrument in the hands of the rulers, carrying out their plans. He stood just where his audience were standing in this matter; only Paul was more zealous, and higher minded, **being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers** (Gal. 1 : 14).

From What was Paul Converted? Paul was not in the ordinary sense a bad man. He was not at all like those Pharisees whom Christ condemned as **whited sepulchers which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.** He was not what is termed "a bad man." He could not have done his work if he had been bad. He was sincere, but in a bad cause. He was religious but it was a mistaken religion.

He saw in Jesus only a crucified criminal, and he, with all Jews, believed that the Messiah was to come as a glorious conqueror. He could see in Jesus only an impostor, lying in a dishonored grave, and so was impelled by conscientious indignation to put down his impious disciples. Nearly the whole nation believed in a different kind of Messiah from Jesus. His great teacher Gamaliel taught him so, and it seemed impossible that the great men, the great teachers, the nation as a whole, could be mistaken. But he did not study the scriptures to see if these things were so. This he ought to have done.

He was honestly on the wrong side. He was acting against the good of his nation and the world. Persecution was wrong, and against God's laws. He was like the leaders of the inquisition, who, — some of them sincere, — sought the unity of the church by cruelties of hell, and not in the way of God and righteousness. Paul was putting in prison, and sending to death innocent persons.

Advantage of this Experience for his future Work. What Paul did was not right, nor pleasing to God, but He compelled it to aid the cause. For it enabled Paul to see things from the Jewish point of view. He understood their feelings, their arguments, their position as to the Messiah, and thus he could, better than others, meet their objections, and present the truth. Paul's zeal was needed, his sincerity was essential, and all his splendid mental and religious characteristics, his manliness, his martyr spirit, — only directed to the truth, and used in its cause.

II. **JESUS APPEARS TO PAUL NEAR DAMASCUS**, vs. 6–13. **HOW PAUL WAS CONVERTED. As I . . . was come nigh unto Damascus about noon**, showing how intense was the light from heaven that suddenly shone round about him, **above the brightness of the sun** (26 : 13). Paul **fell unto the ground.** Several commentaries think that Paul was riding on horseback (or on an ass or camel). **He heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"**

"Who art thou, Lord?"

"I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest."

"What shall I do, Lord."

"Arise, and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee."

How Paul became Converted.

1. There came new light to him.

2. He saw Jesus as he really was in his glory; a living Saviour, raised from the dead (1 Cor. 9 : 1; 15 : 8). He had positive proof of the resurrection from the dead.

3. He was convicted of sin, by Jesus' question, Why persecutest thou me?

4. He heard Jesus' call.

5. He asked what Jesus would have him do. He was ready to obey, and something was given him to do. This confirmed him in his purpose.

6. He received the personal help of an experienced Christian.

7. *The Darkness and Conflict.* "The blindness of Saul was, no doubt, mercifully intended by providence to compel him to attend without distraction to the great matters which had been placed before him. The state of his mind may be gathered from the fact that he took no food or drink during that interval. And versed as he was in the Bible, he could, even in his blindness, search the scriptures, and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, was enabled clearly to discern the whole scheme of Christian doctrine in its fulness and truth." — *Kitto.* Without doubt, these three days were a season of intense inward conflict, alone and in darkness. Could he give up all his ambitious hopes? Could he leave rank, wealth, honor, friends? Could he enter the service of one so despised, and suffer reproach, and danger, and death? And all for what? During this time probably was brought before him the vision of what God would have him do, the work for which he was chosen by God, a glorious and blessed work (26 : 16–18), and perhaps also some of his sufferings for Christ's sake (9 : 16). This was a strong motive for deciding aright. For any true soul there is no louder call to be a Christian than the call to heroism, to work and to suffer for the most glorious cause ever presented to the soul of man.

8. He came into the light.

9. He confessed his faith by baptism.

17. And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance;

18. And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

19. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee:

20. And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

21. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.

22. And they gave him audience unto this word, and *then* lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a *fellow* from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live.

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10. His sins were washed away.

III. **TO THE CONVERTED PAUL IS MADE KNOWN HIS LIFE WORK FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD**, vs. 14–21. **AFTER CONVERSION, WHAT?** 1. **The God of our fathers hath chosen thee** (Am. R., "appointed thee"). He chose Paul because he was the best person in the world to do the work for the kingdom of God, which needed to be done.

2. There were three special preparations for Paul's work.

That thou shouldest know his will. The Epistles are one fruit of this.

And see that Just One (Am. R., "the Righteous One"), Jesus, so that he could know the fact of His resurrection, and that He was the everliving Son of God, the Messiah.

And shouldest hear the voice of his mouth, for guidance, and assurance.

3. His great work was to **be his**, Christ's, **witness unto all men of what thou has seen and heard.**

4. Paul's special work was not to the Jews at Jerusalem, but **I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles**, an entirely new mission, and one of the greatest achievements the world has ever known.

Paul could well feel as Francis Xavier did, and even more intensely, as his life proved. Xavier was in Rome, preparing to go on his great mission to the heathen, he had a vision in his sleep of the sufferings that would come to him — storms, weariness, hostility, hunger, danger, death; but with it he saw the nations he would bring to Christ, and his comrade heard him cry in his sleep, "Yet more, O my God, yet more!" More toil, more sufferings, if thus more souls brought into eternal life.

Changes wrought in Paul by his Conversion.

The purpose and aim of Paul's life were changed. He was like a fine engine with all its powers switched off on another track, in another direction. He was like a servant who changed masters; like an emigrant who took the oath of allegiance to another country.

His whole Mission and work were changed.

He was henceforward on God's side, in sympathy with God's laws, doing the same kind of things Jesus did.

He was indeed a new creation, with new life, new character, new motives, new hopes, new love, new purpose, new work.

For each of us in his own degree, conversion brings similar changes in life.

For Daily Life, — HAVE WE EXPERIENCED THIS GREAT TRANSFORMATION?

Sir Henry Havelock noted that one of his soldiers, who had been very wicked, had become a man of earnest Christian character, and asked him how it was. Said the man, "The Lord Jesus came to me, and said, 'Private, right about face!' and I turned right about face at his word."

IV. **THE MOB CLAMOR FOR PAUL'S DEATH**, vs. 22, 23. **Gave him audience unto this word**, not the word "Gentiles," but his statement that God had commanded him to go on his mission to the Gentiles. "They could not bear the thought of uncircumcised heathen being made equal to the sons of Abraham." "This word fell like a spark on the inflammable mass of their fanaticism." — *Farrar.*

23. And as they cried out, and cast off *their* clothes, and threw dust into the air,

24. The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.

25. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?

26. When the centurion heard *that*, he went, and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.

27. Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.

"They broke out into a frenzy of excitement, and made preparations to stone him." — *Westminster New Testament.* "Then began one of the most odious and despicable spectacles the world can witness, the spectacle of an Oriental mob, hideous with impotent rage, howling, yelling, cursing, gnashing their teeth, flinging about their arms, waving and tossing their blue and red robes, casting dust into the air by handfuls, with all the furious gesticulations of an uncontrolled fanaticism." — *Farrar.*

23. **Cast off their clothes**, "rather, 'tossing their garments' just as **they cast**, threw, **dust in the air** to relieve their excitement and express their execration." — *New Century Bible.* "A manifestation of their uncontrollable rage." — *Hackett.*

Practical Suggestions. 1. The opposition of a mob is no proof or sign that the person or cause assaulted is wrong. It often is incurred because the cause is right.

2. We are to look for the cause of any evil in the right place. The wrong here was not in Paul, but in the mob. The cause of the famine in Ahab's time was not in Elijah, who predicted it, but in Ahab, who had sinned. The cause of commotion in our day is not in the reformers, but in those who uphold the evils that should be reformed.

3. Paul used every power that he had to aid him, — his Roman citizenship, his social position, his knowledge of law, his training, and quick wit.

V. **PAUL SAVED BY HIS ROMAN CITIZENSHIP**, vs. 24–30. **The chief captain**, a Roman, who spoke Latin and Greek, would not understand what Paul was saying in Hebrew (Aramaic), but from the fury of the people, he concluded that Paul must be some great criminal. "Where there was so much smoke there must be some fire." He, therefore, ordered that Paul should be compelled, by torture, to confess his crimes. "The mildest form of this mode of examination was by scourging. A wooden post was erected in a slanting position, and the feet and hands were made fast to it with thongs, and blows applied with the scourge or whip, formed of three lashes or thongs made of leather or small cords, to which, sometimes, iron points or sharp-cornered pieces of metal were fastened."

Punishment by Scourging.

While they were binding Paul, he quietly asked the officer if it was lawful for them to scourge a Roman citizen uncondemned. The preparations were immediately stopped, the commander was called, and learning that Paul was a free-born Roman citizen, he had reason to be afraid that he had gone too far. "How often," says Cicero, "has this exclamation, *I am a Roman citizen*, brought aid and safety even among barbarians in the remotest parts of the earth!" "It was a grave crime, as Claudius Lysias well knew, to scourge a Roman citizen; so at once he stayed the proceedings pending further inquiries, which he conducted in person. The claim of Roman citizenship was instantly allowed. There was no

28. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was *free*-born.

29. Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

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fear of imposture in such a case: the assertion, if false, was punishable with death." See Hastings's *Bible Dictionary*, "Citizenship."

The chief captain told Paul that **with a great sum** he obtained his Roman citizenship; but Paul replied, **But I am a Roman born** (Am. R.).

Paul was well cared for after this.

In order to find out why the Jews were so opposed to Paul, Captain Lysias summoned the Sanhedrin to meet on the next day, thus unconsciously giving Paul another opportunity to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus.

LESSON XIII. — September 24.

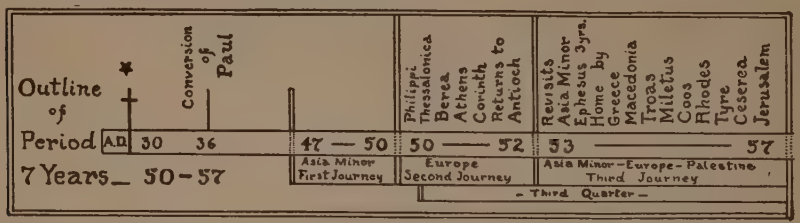
REVIEW.

READING LESSON: 2 Cor. 4:1–5:4. THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT SEEN.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.* — 2 COR. 4:18.

MAP REVIEW. One cannot gain a clear idea of the work of Paul and his adventures, nor impress the story on the memory, without tracing his journeys on the map, and noting the relation of the places to one another.

There is also a great advantage in noting the same places on a modern map, making the whole scene of Paul's activities more real, more closely related to the world as we know it. The best maps available are placed in the front of this volume; and the modern names of the places are given below.



THE SIX CITIES IN WHICH PAUL FOUNDED CHURCHES IN EUROPE, — What he accomplished in them. Their modern names and conditions. The difficulties and dangers he encountered. His success. The Epistles he wrote to them and from them.

Philippi (now in ruins) was the first city in Europe where there was a Christian church. It was founded by Paul, and was especially loved by Paul. From Philippi Paul was driven by a mob. He had a most adventurous escape by means of an angel. The story of Philippi is found in the previous Quarter.

Thessalonica, the modern Saloniki, in Macedonia, formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire in Europe. Here Paul argued from the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. A church was founded consisting of Jews and Greeks. It was a church very dear to Paul, and they to him. He was driven away by a mob, who said he was "turning the world upside down," and by his teaching that Jesus was the Christian's king, he was accused of treason to Rome.

Two Epistles were written to this Church by Paul at Corinth, in which he praised and comforted them, but found no fault. This church was the Church Beautiful.

Athens, then and now the chief city of Greece, and one of the three most renowned cities in the history of the world.

Paul's chief work here was his famous address before the Council of Mars Hill. Here he was treated with indifference but not with mob violence. His stay was short.

Corinth was the great commercial city of Greece, on an isthmus between two seas. At present the original site is in ruins, by an earthquake, but New Corinth has been built 3 miles away, with a population of nearly 15,000. — *Century Dic.*

Here Paul remained a year and a half (Sept. A.D. 51 to Mch. 53) and later he spent three more months there.

It was a difficult field, in the heart of a worldly city. But here he founded his largest Church converted from heathenism. Paul was persecuted here. He had also words of promise from God in a vision.

From this city Paul wrote two letters to Thessalonica.

And later he wrote two letters to the church in Corinth, one while he was at Ephesus late in A.D. 56; the other probably from Philippi, A.D. 57.

First Corinthians. The Corinthian Church had the most need of help from Paul. They were surrounded by a malarial atmosphere of worldliness, every kind of vileness was fashionable, temptations were on every side.

In this letter, Paul wrote some of the wisest, the most glorious, the most heavenly, the most necessary truths that ever came through a human pen. Three selections from this letter were made for our study.

In Lesson 5, the great fundamental truth of Jesus Christ crucified for our sins, the wisdom and power of God. Appealing to the many virtues of the Corinthian Christians, he plead that they should put away their party divisions, and be one in Jesus Christ.

Lesson 6 impresses on our hearts and consciences that we be filled with Love, the greatest thing in the world; and live by the immortal three, Faith, Hope and Love.

In Lesson 7 Paul taught the Corinthians and us, the blessedness of Giving, and records a new Beatitude of Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Lesson 10. The second Epistle to the Corinthians was written at Philippi late in A.D. 57. Here we see described the Heroism of St. Paul.

Ephesus was in the province of Asia (in Asia Minor) on the Ægean Sea (now ruins and a small village near them). The last large city where Paul founded a church. Paul worked here nearly three years. Burning the books of Magic. The silver shrines of Diana. A riot which compelled Paul to leave. After this Paul revisited the churches he had founded in Europe.

Epistle to the Ephesians was written about A.D. 62, 6 years after he had left them, and while he was a prisoner in Rome.

The Journey to Jerusalem, starting from Philippi (now a ruin) where Luke joined Paul to go to Jerusalem with the Gentile churches' collection for the poor. The main places where the party stopped were

Trō'ăs (now a ruin), where Paul joined the rest of the party, and the young man fell out of a third story window.
Assos — now Behràm, a Turkish village.
Mitylē'nē (now 20,000).
Miletus (now a village). Here Paul addressed the Ephesian elders.
Coos (Kos).
Rhodes (2900).
Patara (ruins).
Tyre (now Çur, 6000), attempt to persuade Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.
Ptolemais (now Accho or Acre), on the coast of Palestine.
Cæsarea (now desolate). Here Philip the Evangelist lived with his four daughters who prophesied.
Jerusalem.

Stirring scenes in Jerusalem, the Temple Courts, and Castle Antonia, which the school has just studied.

OCTOBER 1 — DECEMBER 31.

LESSON I. — October 1.

A PLOT THAT FAILED. — Acts 23.

PRINT vs. 14–24. COMMIT vs. 20, 21.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *They shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee, saith Jehovah, to deliver thee.* — JER. 1 : 19.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

"There is an old Persian story, that when God created the earth, it was at first a vast, barren plain, with not a green thing on it to be seen — not a flower, not a bush, not a tree on it. He came forth to view his new creation, and determined to adorn it with beauty; and he sent his angels to sow broadcast over the world the choicest seeds, that should spring up in beauty. Satan followed, and saw the unburied seed lying all over the earth, and he said: 'This is the work of the Almighty, and I will destroy it.' So he went to work, and every seed that could be found he buried out of sight in the soil. . . . Then, with a malignant smile of satisfied pride, he looked to see the chagrin of the Almighty when he should behold his work destroyed. But as he gazed the seed germinated; it broke through the ground in all forms of fruits and flowers, and the desert became an Eden of loveliness and beauty."

This is a picture, or parable, of what Paul's enemies were determined to do to him and the cause of Christianity; but their efforts to destroy him became the means, and the best means, of his gaining his desire to go to Rome, and of preaching the gospel.

We shall watch this divine overruling of the enemies of Christianity in this and the following Lessons.

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 11; Rom. 8 : 28; Ps. 90 : 9–11.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — A.D. 57; at the close of Paul's third missionary journey.

Place. — Castle Antonia, and the Sanhedrin Hall near the Temple court, Jerusalem; and Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Judea, on the Mediterranean coast.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The insult to Paul, — was his indignation right, and rightly expressed?
Paul's apology; for what did he apologize?
Speaking evil of rulers, — always wrong?
A stormy scene in the Council Hall.
Was Paul right in his "Divide and conquer" plan?
The vision.
The plot and Paul's nephew.
Using means and the fulfillment of God's promises.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: A Series of Strange Adventures of Paul.

First Adventure: A STORMY SCENE IN THE HALL OF THE JEWISH SANHEDRIN, vs. 1–5.
Second Adventure: DIVIDE AND CONQUER, vs. 6–10.
Third Adventure: PAUL SEES A RAINBOW OF PROMISE, v. 11.
Fourth Adventure: THE PLOT TO ASSASSINATE PAUL, vs. 12–15.
Fifth Adventure: PAUL'S NEPHEW DISCOVERS THE PLOT AND SAVES HIS UNCLE'S LIFE, vs. 16–35.
ILLUSTRATION OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

ST. PAUL'S PRISON, CÆSAREA

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Acts. The *Expositor's Greek Testament* (Dodd & Mead). *American Commentary* (Am. Baptist Pub. Soc.). The *Teacher's Commentary* (Oxford University Press, N. Y.). Dummelow's *One Vol. Com.*, The *New Century Bible, Bible for Home and School, Westminster New Testament, Expositor's Bible, Cambridge Bible. Maclaren's Expositions of Scripture. Westminster Commentary*, by Rackham. Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church. Commentaries* by Rendall and by Lyman Abbott.

The story of this lesson is made clear and vivid as Robert Bird tells it in his *Saul of Tarsus.* Works on *St. Paul* will be named in the next lesson.

This Lesson pictures *Two Successive Days of Strange Adventures* in which Paul was concerned ; varied and dangerous, with narrow escapes, and unexpected providences. The day was prefaced by that magic word " I am a Roman Citizen " which caused commander Lysias to release Paul from the threatened scourging, and made him more than ordinarily careful in his treatment of Paul.

FIRST ADVENTURE, A STORMY SCENE IN THE COUNCIL HALL OF THE JEWISH SANHEDRIN, vs. 1–5. The Sanhedrin had been commanded by Lysias, the highest Roman military authority in the city, to assemble in their hall in the morning, they being the supreme Jewish authority as to Jewish laws and customs. Here he would expect to learn just what Paul had done that so excited their feelings against him that they wanted to murder him. Hence he sought from them the real facts, which he had been unable to discover.

The prisoner, looking intently at the Council with whom he had once sat, and some of whom he doubtless knew, began with the remarkable words, addressed not to the Tribune, Lysias, but to the Councillors of his nation, **Men and brethren, I have lived,** " acted as a citizen," of the country, and of the Jewish commonwealth, **in all good conscience before God,** not only in the eyes of men ; but in the all-seeing eyes of God.

Immediately Ananias, the high priest, sprang to his feet, for, from his point of view, the missionary to the Gentiles was a traitor to the Commonwealth of the Jews for not requiring the Gentiles to submit to all the Jewish ceremonials, and he **commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth** that dared utter such words. It was a great insult; it practically called Paul a liar.

Paul, flaming with indignation, said unto him, **God shall smite thee, thou whited wall,** thou hypocrite, thou black heart whitewashed to seem pure, **for sittest thou to judge me according to the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law!** This hot retort roused a cry of horror : **Revilest thou God's high priest ?**

Paul immediately made an apology, saying, **I wist not . . . that he,** the one that insulted him, **was the high priest.** This might easily occur, as it is probable that the Roman commander had charge, and the high priest, without his peculiar garments, was mingled with the other members of the Council. Paul may never have seen him, for he was elected high priest after Paul had left the council; or the command coming unexpectedly from the crowd he might not be able to notice who uttered the insulting words. A member of the English House of Commons states that the debates there often illustrate this difficulty of Paul.

Note (1) that it is not said that any one struck Paul; and (2) that Paul did not apologize for his words nor deny that they were true, but only for their being spoken to the high priest. Compare what Christ said to the Pharisees, Matt. 23 : 27. Paul apologized because he had broken another law found in Ex. 22 : 28, which says, **Thou shalt not revile the gods,** Am. R., " revile God " (margin " judges ") **nor curse the ruler of thy people.** See Rom. 13 : 7 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 13–17 ; Jude 8–10.

In Christ's trial one of the officers " struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so ?

" Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil : but if well, why smitest thou me ? "

But when ill treated by the common soldiers, " he opened not his mouth."

Was Paul right in being indignant, and in expressing his indignation ?

Was he one " who was angry and sinned not," as Paul himself wrote in his letter to the Ephesians (4 : 26) ?

Was it proper or wise to call another a " whited sepulcher," a " hypocrite," even if true ?

On the Danforth Memorial book plate is the legend, *Ubi plura nitent non ego paucis*

offendar maculis (where so many things shine out not I feel offended by a few little spots).

The possession of a temper that can flame in indignation against wrong is essential to perfect character. "With all the abuses, the crimes against justice, the frauds, deceits, shams, and mockeries, the cruelty and oppression of weak individuals or races by the strong, the exploitation of those who cannot take care of themselves, the nameless crimes against human health, happiness, and virtue that selfish individuals and combinations perpetrate — with all these, there are causes enough to justify all the anger in the world; and if all the anger in the world were directed against such abuses, it would not take long to drive most of them out of the world."

Speaking Evil of Rulers Unnecessarily is a great wrong to them and to the country.

1. To misjudge their motives, to caricature their peculiarities, to magnify their imperfections, to hold up to ridicule their efforts at reform in joke and wit, is an injury to the whole rising generation.

Not long ago an after-dinner wit held up to ridicule the President of the United States in the usual way of disregard to truth. A statesman present rebuked him rightly. The excuse was that the witticisms were mere jokes. But a witty man who is not witty enough to say witty things without distorting and caricaturing and presenting in ridiculous forms good men and good things, should have the opportunity to keep silence.

2. It is a great evil to say evil things of any one, which we do not *know* to be true, and even then unless it is necessary to help them, or to keep others from being injured by them. But it is a far greater injury to so speak of our rulers. It breeds lawlessness.

Duruy.

A Centurion, XIth Legion.

3. This does not forbid a fair and candid discussion of the plans, actions, and principles of our rulers, and such statements of their character and fitness for office as are necessary to prevent bad men from being elected to office, and from injuring others by their example.

SECOND ADVENTURE. DIVIDE AND CONQUER, vs. 6–10. The situation is the same as in the previous verses. The Sanhedrin is in session in their hall. The Roman commander with his guard of soldiers is there to discover what crime Paul has committed. Paul is still speaking in his own defence. While speaking he recollects that the council is composed of two factions bitterly opposed to one another.

One party was composed of Pharisees. "They taught a resurrection of the dead; so did he. They taught the coming of the Kingdom of God; so did he. They taught the advent of the Messiah; so did he. They taught an intercourse of God with men by the medium of angels, dreams and visions; so did he. He shared with the Pharisees exactly those doctrines on account of which he was regarded as a seducer of the people." — From *Farrar's St. Paul.*

The Sadducees, on the other hand, **say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit,** v. 8. Josephus adds that they denied also future rewards and punishments, and even maintained that the soul perishes with the body. They were priests of aristocratic family, and their duties were political as well as religious. They resented the attempt to impose upon them an excess of legal strictness, such as the traditions and minute observances the Pharisees imposed on the people. — From *Hastings's Bib. Dic.*

Paul, seeing that he would find in the Council neither justice nor mercy, threw among them the apple of discord, by crying out, **Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son** (descendant) **of Pharisees: touching the hope of the resurrection of the dead, I am called in question.** (V. 6, Am. R.) "That is, Israel's Messianic hope, and the Resur-

rection on which it depended. This stands out more clearly in 26 : 6–8, in his address before Agrippa : **All the Jews know that after the straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee, and now I stand here to be judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers.**

Paul's strategy was successful. The two parties forgot Paul, and began to clash with one another, till the dissension was so loud and bitter that Lysias, **fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle** (v. 10).

For the Roman officer could see that if the Pharisees defended Paul, that fact proved that he was guilty of no crime.

Illustration. Paul's course reminds us of the Greek legend of Cadmus who slew a dragon and sowed the teeth in the field. The dragon's teeth sprang up from the ground armed giants, a great army. Then he took up a rock and threw it among them. So that instead of slaying him they went to fighting one another. And they slew one another till only one tall giant remained, and he became the helper of Cadmus in carrying stones for the walls of the city of Thebes he began to build.

Was Paul right in using this shrewd method of escape?

THIRD ADVENTURE. PAUL SEES A RAINBOW OF PROMISE IN THE STORM, v. 11. There were many reasons why Paul was in need of comfort and cheer at this time. (1) The reaction after two days of such exhausting excitement and exertion. (2) He had just escaped death, and was in the power of heathen who hated the gospel, and were likely to be influenced by the cunning and powerful Jewish hierarchy to put him to death. (3) The result of his work in Jerusalem seemed likely to be a failure. His very efforts to bring harmony and peace, and to bring the Jews into the kingdom, had apparently made matters worse. (4) His prayers and long-cherished hope that he might preach the gospel in Rome seemed likely to be frustrated.

In the darkness of the following night, which faintly represented the inner darkness of Paul's hopes, there shone a great light. In a vision **the Lord stood by him**, the real glorified Jesus whom he actually saw near Damascus, now again was really present, saying, **Be of good cheer : for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome** (Am. R.). These brief words included many things that Paul needed to know for his good cheer. (1) The manifest presence of Christ. Paul was not alone, but He who had all power and wisdom and love was with him as his friend. (2) He had the approval of God, and his conscience would be at peace. (3) His life was safe. Paul was immortal till his work was done. (4) He had more work yet to do for the Master ; more souls were to be saved through him from sin and death. (5) He should have his heart's desire, and preach the gospel in Rome, the capital of the world. (6) All things were working together for good, and the very hindrances he met were the means of accomplishing his desired purpose.

The human soul often meets strange experiences, disappointments, sufferings, discouragements, and sees them in others, which force him to say :

"Why?
This is the cry
That echoes through the wilderness of earth,
Through song and sorrow, day of death and birth:
'Why?'

"It is the high
Wail of the child with all his life to face,
Man's last dumb question as he reaches space:
'Why?'"

The only answer is the present vision of the living presence of Jesus, with his love and promises, and comfort.

Victor Hugo's Parable. "I wonder if you have read one of Victor Hugo's beautiful parables which tells of the little bird perched upon the furthermost branch of a tree which is swayed hither and thither by the wind, while underneath is a roaring and raging cataract? And yet the little bird sings on undisturbed. Why? Because it knows that at any moment it can spread its wings and soar out of danger up into the blue." — *J. S. Holden, M.A.*

FOURTH ADVENTURE. THE PLOT TO ASSASSINATE PAUL, vs. 12–15. The next morning after the trial of Paul, and his rescue, forty Jews **bound themselves under a curse that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.** It is probable that among the conspirators were members of the fanatic association called Sicarii, "The Assassins," "Dagger men," who played a prominent part in the last turbulent years of Jerusalem.

Their plan was simple, but clever (v. 15). The forty kept out of sight themselves, but they went to the members of the Sanhedrin as the leading men who could influence **the chief captain that he bring him**, Paul, **down** from the castle ; **as though ye would**

14. And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.

15. Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.

16. And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17. Then Paul called one of the centurions unto *him*, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain; for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

18. So he took him, and brought *him* to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto *him*, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19. Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went *with him* aside privately, and asked *him*, What is that thou hast to tell me?

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judge of his case more exactly (Am. R.). This request would be perfectly natural, and appeal to Lysias' sense of justice, because the former meeting of the Sanhedrin had been broken up before they had an opportunity to present their case against Paul.

We, or ever he come near, (Am. R., " before he comes near ") **are ready to kill him.** The first word stands in the Greek with a kind of ferocious emphasis. " You may safely leave *us* to do our part." Their plan was to assassinate him on his way down from the barracks to the council. " The suspicion of complicity in the crime would not fall upon the chief priests and elders. Their intention would appear to have been to give St. Paul a fair hearing, and the murder would seem to be the work of some fanatics unconnected with the council." — *Professor Lumby*, in *Cambridge Bible*. The assassins would get into some quarrel with the people, and while the guards were attempting to quell that disturbance, some of the assassins would get near enough to Paul to kill him with their daggers, and escape.

FIFTH ADVENTURE. A BRIGHT YOUNG MAN, PAUL'S NEPHEW, DISCOVERS THE PLOT, AND SAVES HIS UNCLE'S LIFE, vs. 16–35. " Next day came a sudden change of scene. Paul's family, which Luke has not previously mentioned, had not wholly deserted him when he became a Christian." — *Ramsay*.

16. Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait. This is the first mention of Paul's nephew. We do not know how old he was, only that he was a young man. Several writers speak of him as a boy. We do not know how or when he came to Jerusalem, whether he was a citizen of the city, or had only come on a visit to attend some of the great feasts. He must have been proud of his uncle, though under these brief and trying conditions Paul probably had had no opportunity to meet his sister and her son, or for them to see him. Without doubt the boy or young man had watched all the proceedings connected with Paul.

How the young man discovered the plot is not difficult to conceive. There were a large number concerned in the plot, not only the 40 " dagger men," but members of the Sanhedrin, certainly knew what the plan was. And why should they be careful not to talk about it with others who hated Paul, especially as the apostle was shut up in the castle, and could know nothing about it. Paul's nephew could easily overhear the conversation and learn about the plan.

" How brave and true a heart was this, that beat in the breast of this little Jew! 'They would kill his dear old Uncle Paul — would they!' I can see his eyes blaze. God bless these plucky boys! Uncle Paul, you can never have a more loyal friend than your sister's son. One of the most sacred corners in a boy's heart is the shrine where there is an altar for uncle worship." — *C. Frederic Goss* in *Sunday School Times*.

The young man first went to the castle and told his uncle. **Paul called one of the centurions** (captain we would call him) and asked him to **bring this young man unto the chief captain**, the commander Lysias. " The readiness of the centurion to comply with Paul's request, and of the chief-captain to give audience to the young man, and the special heed given to his message, in taking him aside privately, indicate the in-

20. And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to-morrow into the council, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly.

21. But do not thou yield unto them; for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.

22. So the chief captain *then* let the young man depart, and charged *him*, *See thou* tell no man that thou hast showed these things to me.

23. And he called unto *him* two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cesarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night;

24. And provide *them* beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring *him* safe unto Felix the governor.

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fluence which Paul, though a prisoner, had already secured by his personal character." —*Lyman Abbott.*

Verses 20–21 repeat the young man's story. V. 20. **They would enquire** (Am. R., "Thou wouldest inquire"). V. 21. **With an oath** (Am. R., "under a curse"). Lysias requested the young man to **tell no man that thou hast showed these things to me**. Then he, "recognizing from the nature of the conspiracy and the desperate character of the Jewish fanatics that Paul was not safe in Jerusalem, sent him under a strong guard to Cæsarea, which was reached after a journey on horseback lasting through the night and the following day." — *Ramsay.*

He assembled a guard of two hundred infantry, the ordinary Roman soldiers, two hundred spearmen, a special class of light-armed soldiers and a band of seventy cavalrymen. No band of forty zealots could rescue Paul from such a guard. They started secretly at nine o'clock in the evening, **the third hour of the night** (v. 23), for Cæsarea, the Roman capital. They all continued their journey till some time the next morning when they reached the city of Antipatris 42 or 43 miles from Jerusalem. Here it was safe to send the 400 soldiers back to the Castle at Jerusalem, while the 70 cavalrymen conducted Paul the remaining miles to Cæsarea, where Paul was placed in the prisoners' apartment of Herod's Palace to await his accusers.

Roman Greave and Spear.

God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.

All this time of stress God was answering Paul's prayers and fulfilling his hopes, to preach the Gospel in Rome, the then capital of the world.

The Workings of Providence. "The two bitter antagonists, Jew and Roman, seem to themselves to be working in direct opposition; but God is using them both to carry out his design. Paul has to be got to Rome, and these two forces are combined, by a wisdom beyond their ken, to carry him thither. Two cogged wheels, turning in opposite directions, fit into each other, and grind out a resultant motion, different from either of theirs.

"God's finger is as evident in the concatenation of co-operating natural events as in any miracle. To co-ordinate these so that they concur to bring about the fulfilment of his will may be a less conspicuous, but is not a less veritable, token of a sovereign will at work in the world than any miracle. And in this case how wonderfully separate factors, who think themselves quite independent, are all handled like pawns on a chessboard." — *Maclaren.*

"If the pieces on a chess-board could see and think, the moves would be a continual puzzle. They could not tell why one piece was moved here, and another there, till the combination of moves was complete. Life is full of such mysteries. Certain lessons,

certain disciplines, certain obstacles, cannot be understood till they are combined with other providences."

Trouble changed into a Blessing. In the cemetery among the beautiful hills of Williamstown stands a monument to one of my college classmates. While wrestling, in his freshman year, he injured his knee. Lameness, pain, and ill-health were his guardian angels through study and travel, till he became a professor in the college and a saintly man, whose face shone almost like that of Moses when he came from the presence of God. On that monument are carved the words which his life had wrought out : *Meine Trübsal war mein Glück*, " My misfortune has been my good fortune." " My trouble has been my blessing."

The very things that seemed a hindrance were the means for accomplishing Paul's desire and God's purposes. Failures rightly used have been the means of success.

Hands off. E. E. Hale's story of Providence. A very interesting and illustrative tale in reference to Providence is told by Rev. E. E. Hale, in his *Christmas in a Palace.* The story is entitled " Hands Off." It represents a man in another stage of existence, looking down upon Joseph as he is in the hands of the Midianites. Being an active, ingenious young man, Joseph succeeded in escaping from his captors on the first night of his captivity, and had just reached the outer limits of the camp when a yellow dog barked, awakened his captors, and Joseph was returned to his captivity. But the on-looker wanted to interfere and kill the dog before he had awakened the camp. Then Joseph would have reached home in safety, and great sorrows have been avoided. But his guardian said, " Hands Off." And to let him see the evil of his interference, took him to a world where he could try his experiment. There he killed the dog. Joseph reached home in safety, his father rejoiced, his brothers were comforted. But when the famine came, there had been no Joseph to lay up the corn. Palestine and Egypt were starved. Great numbers died, and the rest were so weakened that they were destroyed by the savage Hittites. Civilization was destroyed. Egypt blotted out. Greece and Rome remained in a barbarous state. The whole history of the world was changed and countless evils came because a man in his ignorant wisdom killed a dog and saved Joseph from present trouble to his future loss.

LESSON II. — October 8.

PAUL BEFORE FELIX. — Acts 24.

PRINT vs. 10–21. COMMIT vs. 14, 15.

GOLDEN TEXT. — ***Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense toward God and man always.*** — Acts 24 : 16.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

" Rev. John T. Faris proposed to begin this lesson by asking, ' Have you ever been in a court of justice when a trial was in progress ? '

" Then ask one of the boys to tell what he saw and heard. Get him to describe the prisoner's box, the prosecuting attorney, and the jury.

" Then say, ' I wonder if you would like to turn our study hour to-day into a court of justice for the trial of the man accused by the Jews of defiling the temple.' (Tell briefly the circumstances of his arrest, and the events following, to the end of the last lesson.)

" Let all the members of the class but two consider themselves a jury to consider the evidence for and against Paul. One of the two members excepted should be appointed prosecuting attorney, while the other should be asked to represent Paul. The prosecuting attorney should detail the counts in the indictment found against Paul, vs. 5 and 6, while the attorney for the prisoner should pick out the points in Paul's defence, vs. 11–21."

It would be well for one of the class to personate Felix, both as judge, and as a hearer of Paul's gospel.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The character of Governor Felix.
The several charges against Paul.
Paul's answer to these charges.
Why the decision was delayed.
Did Paul imply in v. 20 that he did wrong in dividing the Council (23 : 6)?
Paul's address before Felix and Drusilla.
Why did Felix tremble?
The more convenient season.

LEARN BY HEART.

John 16 : 8–11.

Use "convince" instead of "reprove" or "convict."

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries given in the last lesson.
Books on St. Paul, and the Acts.
Farrar's *Life of Paul.*
St. Paul the Orator, by Maurice Jones.
Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church.*
The Man Paul, by Speer.
Apostolic Age, by Purves, by McGiffert, by Bartlett, by the Burrell Brothers.
Bosworth's *Studies in Acts and Epistles.*

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

On the attack of Tertullus upon Paul's character, read the description of Prejudice and Ill-will in *Pilgrim's Progress.*

On the boldness of Paul before Felix, compare Bishop Latimer preaching before Henry VIII. ; Luther before the Diet of Worms ; Socrates and the Athenians : Plato's *Apology*, p. 23.

On Felix trembling under Paul's preaching, see Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures* (vol. IV.), "Conscience," where are brought together illustrations from a wide range of literature. Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse* (vol. III.), "The Bosom Serpent," Browning's *Poems*, "Pippa Passes," Shakespeare's *Richard III.* and *Macbeth*, Butler's *Analogy*, chap. 5.

On delaying duty, see Ella Wheeler Wilcox's poem, "The Land of Pretty Soon," and another poem, "The House of Never by the Hills of By and By," in *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts.*

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Paul before Felix, and Felix before Paul.

I. The Court Scene.
II. Tertullus the Roman Lawyer Accuses Paul of Three Crimes, vs. 1–9.
Insurrection ; an enemy of the Jewish commonwealth ; sacrilege.
III. Paul Refutes the Charges of Tertullus, and Wins his Case, vs. 10–22.
IV. Felix before Paul, vs. 23–26.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Spring of A.D. 57, five days after the last lesson, and twelve days after Paul reached Jerusalem with his collection for the poor.

Place. — Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Judea.

Place in the History. — At the close of Paul's three great missionary journeys ; and the beginning of his movement toward Rome.

I. **THE COURT SCENE.** We can picture the scene in the Courtroom of Herod's palace. The governor, Felix, in his gorgeous official regalia sitting on his throne ; on the platform near him would be the high priest of the Jews in his richly colored and jewelled robes ; and the lawyer Tertullus in his Roman toga ; while the elders of the Sanhedrin who had come down from Jerusalem as witnesses against Paul, to confirm the accusations of Tertullus, would be in the same vicinity. On one side were the centurion and his soldiers guarding the prisoner Paul.

"It was the fifth day after St. Paul's arrival at Cesarea," writes Canon Farrar, "that he was brought to trial. The momentary diversion in his favor, of which by this time the Pharisees were probably ashamed, had settled into a unanimous hatred, and the elders, probably of both parties, hurried down to accuse their adversary. Ananias in person accompanied them, eager for revenge against the man who had compared him to a plastered sepulchre [' whited wall ' ; and all the more because it was true]. It must have been intensely disagreeable to these dignified personages to be forced to hurry on a fatiguing journey of some seventy miles from the religious to the political capital of Judea, in order to induce a Gentile dog to give up an apostate to their jurisdiction; but the Sanhedrists, smarting under defeat, would not be likely to leave any stone unturned which should bring the offender within reach of vengeance.

"They wished to make sure of the extradition of their victim, and being little able to plead in Greek or Latin, and more or less ignorant of the procedure in Roman courts, they gave their brief to a provincial barrister named Tertullus."

This man was chosen because of his persuasive tongue that could make white seem black ; and from the fact that a Roman lawyer would have more influence, as an unbiassed man, in a Roman court, and could more easily make it appear that Paul "was dangerous to the Roman power, and not merely a turbulent and renegade Jew."

II. **TERTULLUS, THE ROMAN ADVOCATE, ACCUSES PAUL OF THREE CRIMES AGAINST THE COMMON WELFARE**, vs. 2–9. *Introduction. Tertullus adroitly opens his plea with a Eulogy of Felix.*

Roman Hall of Justice.

"According to the rules prescribed in the ancient schools of oratory he began his speech with an elaborate compliment to the Governor, designed to conciliate his favor; and in complimenting him on the excellence of his administration the orator went far beyond the limits of truth. Felix had in reality been an exceptionally bad Governor; and two years later the Jews complained to Nero about his conduct, and he was recalled." — *Sir William Ramsay.*

Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness (Am. R., "much peace"). This artful encomium was based on some facts, on which Felix could pride himself. The substratum of truth was his energy and vigor in suppressing robberies and rebellion. "He seized and sent to Rome a famous brigand called Eleazer, who had ravaged the country for nearly twenty years; he repressed the rebellion of the Egyptian impostor; and quieted a sedition which arose between the Jewish and Greek inhabitants of Cæsarea." — *Josephus, Antiquities.*

This was the one good thing he did for his country. We learn from Tacitus that Felix in all savageness and profligacy wielded the power of a king in the spirit of a slave.

"He left a Corsair's name to other times
Linked to one virtue and a thousand crimes." — *Byron.*

Hence **by thee we enjoy great quietness.** "Yet, notwithstanding, he was probably the worst governor that Judea ever had."

"It was one of the ironies of this topsy-turvy world that set such a man as the Roman governor on the bench, and such a one as Paul at the bar. 'Beggars on horseback and princes walking' are bad enough, but scoundrels as magistrates and saints as prisoners on their trial are worse still." — *Maclaren.*

The First Charge against Paul was Treason, Insurrection against Rome. 5. **We have found this man**, pointing to Paul, **a pestilent fellow**, *a plague, a pestilence.*

A mover of sedition, better, "*insurrections*" (as in Am. R.) **among all the Jews throughout the world**, the Roman Empire, the civilized world. "We must bear in mind that Paul had been assailed at a time when Jerusalem was full of strangers come to the feast. It is not improbable that from some of the Jewish visitors particulars had been gathered about the apostle's troubles at Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus, and elsewhere, which in the minds and on the lips of his accusers would be held for seditious conduct, conduct which had brought him at times under the notice of the tribunals. This Tertullus would put forward in its darkest colors." — *Cambridge Bible.* In Thessalonica the apostle and his companions had been described as "those who had turned the world upside down," and doing things "contrary to the decrees of Cæsar" (17 : 6, 7). This charge would be especially obnoxious to Felix, who had just been praised for keeping the peace in his dominions. But it was a clever misrepresentation of the facts, for "it hides the fact that the troubles had always been originated by Paul's opponents, and that his friends had been unresisting sufferers. Still it was a dangerous charge, considering the character of most Roman officials, who were bent on keeping things quiet at almost any cost." — *Ramsay.*

"Nothing," said Lord Morley, "makes a man reason so badly as ignorance of the facts." But knowledge of a part of a fact, when it is treated as the whole, is still worse.

10. Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:

11. Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.

It is altogether probable that Tertullus got his points from Ananias and the elders, not from any personal knowledge. Hence his statements were untrue.

The Second Charge against Paul, — that he was an enemy to the Jewish commonwealth. 5. **A ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.** "This was really in the eyes of the Jews *the* offence which Paul had committed." It was here urged as an offence against the laws of the empire, inasmuch as the prisoner was the means of divisions among the Jews, and riots and fierce contentions, which made discords in the Roman empire, even in the province over which Felix ruled, and which he had done so much to quiet, and where he had been so highly praised for keeping the peace.

"That Paul was a leader of the Nazaræan heresy," says Professor Ramsay, "was not a serious charge: the Romans had no desire to interfere between one Jewish sect and another: the accusation is made only to lead on to the next charge."

The Third Charge against Paul, — Sacrilege, Profaning the Temple. 6. **Who moreover assayed to profane the Temple** (Am. R.) by bringing the unholy, that which was excluded from the sanctuary, into the Holy Place; referring to the incident of the mob in the temple courts, a few days before. Tertullus misstates the facts, representing Paul as arrested legally, and taken from the hands of the Jewish authorities by the despotic act of the chief-captain. **Whom we took**, "on whom also we laid hold" (Am. R., which omits the remainder of verse 6, the whole of verse 7, and the first clause of verse 8).

"The Romans had legalized the Jewish ritual, and recognized any serious outrage against its ordinances as a crime; and the profanation of the holy place would be a serious outrage. The weak part of Tertullus' case was that he produced no evidence to support his charges. The accusers were there, but they had no witness: they asked Felix to examine Paul and judge from what Paul answered." — *Ramsay.*

9. At the close of Tertullus' speech the high priest and the elders **joined in the charge affirming that these things were so** (Am. R.).

Illustration. Telling the Truth. The accusers told only part of the truth, and that made their charge utterly false. "A hard-faced woman called on her minister to complain that in doing her duty her feelings had been hurt by something some one had said about her. 'And I only told her the whole truth,' the woman complained. The 'whole truth,' the minister repeated, 'that was a wonderful achievement. . . . Suppose you tell me exactly what you said about Millie.' 'I said,' Mrs. Potter replied, 'that Millie was growing wild and everybody was talking about her, and if her mother didn't watch her closely, it would be too late.' 'And you called that the truth?' the minister asked. 'You said nothing about Millie's being a pretty, affectionate child, nothing about her clever fingers, nor her kind-heartedness, nor her unselfishness.' 'What had that to do with it?' she asked. 'Everything, if you were telling the truth. To take a bit of the shadow-side and offer that as a perfect picture is no more the truth than to offer only the bright-side. Suppose you think the matter over, and whenever you tell something on the shadow-side, stop and tell something on the bright-side to balance it.'" — *Youth's Companion.*

III. **PAUL REFUTES THE CHARGES OF TERTULLUS**, vs. 10–21. *Paul's Introduction.* Paul's preamble was at once courteous, sincere, and true to fact. It was "complimentary without falling into flattery." "There is scarcely a more striking contrast in the records of oratory than that between the fulsome harangue of the hired advocate Tertullus and the manly simplicity of Paul's defence." — *William Smith, New Test. Hist.*

Thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation. This was a good reason why Paul could, as he said, **cheerfully make my defence** (Am. R.); for he had thus learned to understand the Jews and their customs, and all the more because his wife Drusilla was a Jewess (v. 24).

Paul's Answer to the First Charge, — Insurrection against Rome, was a simple statement of the facts.

11. **There are yet but** (Am. R., "it is not more than") **twelve days since I went**

12. And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:

13. Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.

14. But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets:

15. And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

16. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and *toward* men.

17. Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.

18. Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.

19. Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me.

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up to Jerusalem for to worship. This shows that the whole story was fresh in the memory of both friends and foes.

Paul did not do one of the things with which he was charged. The Jews began the riot, and did all the rioting that was done. Paul did not dispute in the temple, nor stir up a crowd (Am. R.); the Jews did the "stirring up."

The case against Paul was like that which Ahab in olden time made against Elijah on account of the famine, — "Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel?" to which Elijah answered, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house."

Paul's Answer to the Second Charge, that he was a Ringleader of the Sect of the Nazarenes (vs. 14–16) was an acknowledgment that he belonged to the Christian Way of salvation; but he denied that this was heresy. Christianity was not a sect, but the only *way* through which the Jewish religion could fulfil its mission; it was the blossoming and fruitage of the whole tree, not a mere branch grafted into it, and bearing a different kind of fruit.

Paul was a true Jew, and a good Pharisee; for

1. He worshipped the same God (14), **the God of my** (our) **fathers**, but "after the Way which they call a sect" (Am. R.).

2. He believed in the Jewish law and prophets. From them he knew that Jesus was the Messiah.

3. Paul agreed with the Pharisees in having (15) **hope toward God**, supporting itself on God, looking to God as its source and fulfiller, **that there shall be a resurrection of the dead** and therefore immortal life.

16. Herein, in this confession of faith and principles just expressed. **Do I exercise myself.** The Greek verb means *to work raw material* into some object, *to form curiously by art* as a bowl, hence, *to discipline, to train* as the human soul into its perfection, "implying training one's self, as in an art that requires practice for its perfection (comp. 1 Cor. 9 : 27; 1 John 3 : 3)." We are apt to think that whatever other difficulties the apostles had to contend with, they had none within. But it was not so. The whole aim of Paul's life was to be perfect like the man Jesus, to have **a conscience void of offence, toward God** in heart and worship, and **toward men** in good deeds. "Both aspects fall within the purview of conscience, and, if it is to be 'good,' it must be able to certify that our acts do not 'offend' God and do not cause men to stumble. Such a conscience is not ours without rigid, continual discipline." We cannot have even good bodies without disciplining them. We cannot be good athletes, or business men or scholars, or gentlemen or ladies without discipline.

Paul's Answer to the Charge of Profaning the Temple (vs. 17–21) was a simple denial, by telling the story as it actually took place. Not one of the witnesses had come to accuse him; and even those who were members of the Council, could find no single wrong thing he had done.

18, 19. Certain Jews from Asia, the province of Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital, **who ought to have been here before thee, and object** (Am. R., "to make accusation") **if they had ought against me.** They had probably left for home.

20. Or else let these same *here* say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council,

21. Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

They did not dare to come because they were the ones who had wronged Paul and were liable to punishment.

20. Or else let these same, Ananias and the elders, "these men themselves" (Am. R.) **say if they have found any evil doing in me while I stood before the council.** (Am. R., "say what wrong-doing they found when I stood," etc.). They could have told what evil they had proposed to do to Paul, and Paul and Lysias the soldiers could have confirmed it.

21. Except it be. He had not *done any* evil, and the only possible thing which could be *construed* into exciting a tumult was his siding with one party in the council, which was the occasion of a division among them. **For this one voice.** "Voice" refers to the act of speaking rather than to what was said. **Touching the resurrection**, etc. He quotes his own words (chap. 23 : 6), and quite accurately.

There was no answer to Paul's argument, for there could be none.

The decision of the court. Felix deferred his decision.

22. Felix . . . having more perfect, "exact," (Am. R.) **knowledge of that way**, "concerning the Way," (Am. R.) the life and teachings of Christ and his disciples. Cornelius the centurion and Philip the evangelist lived at Cæsarea. Therefore, knowing the character of the disciples, and that Paul's story accorded with what he knew of them, Felix, by deferring his decision, avoided outrageous injustice to Paul, and at the same time avoided giving serious offence to the turbulent Jews who knew his evil deeds.

IV. **FELIX BEFORE PAUL**, vs. 23–26. Felix committed Paul into the charge of a centurion for safe keeping, but instructed him **to let him have liberty** (Am. R., "indulgence"), all the freedom consistent with safety. His friends, such as Luke the physician, the evangelist Philip, whom Paul visited two weeks before, and the Christian community, were allowed to visit him, and minister to his wants, "to bring food, books, letters, writing materials, etc. Thus Felix attempted by kindly treatment to reconcile his conscience to the fact that he was keeping in bonds a prisoner whom he knew he ought to set free." — From *St. Paul the Orator.*

Paul before Felix and Drusilla.

After a time Felix and his wife Drusilla sent for Paul **concerning the faith in Christ.** We will understand better why Paul discoursed to them as he did if we recall some of the circumstances.

Drusilla was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I., who died in Cæsarea in horrible torments (Acts 12 : 23), and sister of the Herod Agrippa II., of chapter 25, and therefore a Jewess. She was endowed with extreme beauty, like her sister Bernice of the next chapter, and married, when only about fifteen, Azizus, the petty king of Hamath, north of Palestine. Felix, a libidinous old slave, well advanced toward sixty, by the

aid of that Simon Magus, it is said, who wanted to buy the Holy Ghost (Acts 8 : 18, 19), seduced the girl, then only eighteen years old, and carried her away as his wife. They had one son.

"The awful eruption of Vesuvius, A.D. 79, that overwhelmed Pompeii amid its luxuries, its debaucheries, and its idolatries, blessed mankind by burying beneath the storm of suffocating ashes the Princess Drusilla and her only child." — *Leonard W. Bacon.*

1. *Paul discoursed on Righteousness*, right principles, right conduct, integrity, justice; all the duties which man owes to man ; the righteousness which Jesus expressed in his whole life ; and into which man may be "transformed into the same image from glory to glory." He set forth "the beauty of holiness," the eternal blessedness of right living and right doing. Note that Paul condemned the vices by teaching and picturing the opposite virtues. He let the truth convict them. The positive was much the more effective way. For if you cultivate the virtues, you must, by very necessity, root out the vices.

2. *Paul Preached Temperance*, self-control (as in Am. R.), the action of the Will, which is the king of all the forces of the mind, in overcoming sin and lust and temptation. "A good life consists in the overcoming of difficulties. A difficulty or trial which is not overcome gives an opening to sin." — *Ramsay.* Temperance, here, is the ability to guide and restrain all one's feelings and appetites ; having the passions and powers of the soul under the control of reason and conscience, as a horse is under the control of its rider, and obeys his guiding rein, or a ship is under the control of its captain.

"These were the virtues in which the two before him were most lacking, — a man who had stolen another man's wife, and the woman who had let herself be stolen, and was now sitting by the thief's side." — *Maclaren.*

Helen Keller, the brilliant deaf, dumb, and blind girl, wrote, "The keynote of my life is this — always to regard as mere impertinences of fate the handicaps which were placed upon my life almost at the beginning. I resolved that they should not crush or dwarf my soul, but, rather, be made to 'blossom, like Aaron's rod, with flowers.'"

3. *Paul preached a Judgment to come* with its rewards for virtue, and punishment for sin and crime. The laws of nature and of spirit are God's eternal laws, from which there is no escape except by repentance, and turning from disobedience to obedience. Paul presented this motive in all its terrible force to persuade those before him to enter upon the life of righteousness and self-control. Without doubt he showed how ready Christ was to forgive sins, and to welcome the prodigal to his Father's house and kingdom ; how able he was to impart the new life of righteousness and peace.

Compare Bishop Latimer preaching before Henry VIII. Luther before the Diet of Worms. Socrates and the Athenians.

The Result, — Felix trembled, but he did not repent. The Greek is much stronger than "trembled." In the Am. R. it reads "was terrified." His conscience told him that what Paul said was true.

Compare Browning's *Poems*, "Pippa Passes." "I know no poem since *Macbeth* that so portrays the agony of an awakened conscience." The Furies, in the *Classical Dictionary*. Pres. Stanley Hall's *A Study of Fears*. Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse*, vol. ii., "The Bosom Serpent," where the chief character continually exclaims, "It gnaws me." Hood's *Poems*, "Dream of Eugene Aram." —

"And lo, the universal air
Seemed lit with ghastly flame;
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame."

"The soul of the unhappy mortal of whom I speak closed to the light in mid-day ; that is, *he closed his own shutters*, by which any man may make night when he pleases." — *Rogers.*

Felix was unwilling to decide for righteousness. One reason why Felix wanted to defer his decision may well have been that he would have to put away Drusilla if he would be righteous. She is represented by Professor Wilkinson in his Epic of Paul, as saying,

"I to be now by him flung to the dogs!
All at the beck of an apostate Jew,
Arraigned a culprit at his judgment-bar!
Drusilla, rouse thee, say, It must not be!
Drusilla, arm thee, swear, It shall not be!"

When I have a convenient season. He put off deciding to repent till he could hear more. But his good feelings vanished like "the morning cloud and the early dew."

THE LAND OF PRETTY SOON

"I know a land where the streets are paved
With the things which we meant to achieve.
It is walled with the money we meant to have saved,
And the pleasures for which we grieve.
The kind words unspoken, the promises broken,
And many a coveted boon,
Are stowed away there in that land somewhere,
The land of Pretty Soon.

"There are uncut jewels of possible fame
Lying about in the dust,
And many a noble and lofty aim
Covered with mold and rust.
And oh! this place, while it seems so near,
Is farther away than the moon;
Though our purpose is fair, we never get there,
To the land of Pretty Soon.

"The road that leads to that mystic land
Is strewn with pitiful wrecks,
And the ships that have sailed for its shining strand
Bear skeletons on their decks.
It is further at noon than it was at dawn,
And further at night than at noon.
Oh, let us beware of that land down there —
The land of 'Pretty-Soon.'" — *Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*

THE HOUSE OF NEVER

"The house of Never is built, they say,
Just over the hills of the By-and-By;
Its gates are reached by a devious way,
Hidden from all but an angel's eye.
It winds about and in and out
The hills and dales to sever.
Once over the hills of the By-and-By
And you're lost in the house of Never.

"The house of Never is filled with waits,
With just-in-a-minutes and pretty-soons;
The noise of their wings as they beat the gates
Comes back to earth in the afternoons,
When shadows fly across the sky
And rush in rude endeavor
To question the hills of the By-and-By
As they ask for the house of Never.

"The house of Never was built with tears;
And lost in the hills of the By-and-By
Are a million hopes and a million fears —
A baby's smiles and a woman's cry."

"'Now' is the only bird that lays golden eggs."
— *Lowell.*

Now is the accepted time, Now is the day of Salvation.

LESSON III. — October 15.

THE APPEAL TO CÆSAR. — Acts 25.

PRINT vs. 1-12. COMMIT vs. 10, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *It is enough for the disciple that he be as his teacher, and the servant as his lord.* — Matt. 10:25.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

This is the second of three lessons that centre at Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Judea. It will be well to begin this lesson with bringing together the places, persons, and events that cluster around this city, so far as they relate to Paul. On the previous Sunday set the class to work during the week at reading over these chapters, and putting down on paper what they can find, to bring to the class; ready to report, compare together, and agree on the results.

Bring a map, as large as you can find, and not only point out the location of the city, but the places from which the individuals came to it on this occasion.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — August, A.D. 59, two years after the last lesson.

Place. — Cæsarea, the political capital of Judea. Cæsarea Philippi, the capital of the region north of the Sea of Galilee.

Place in the History. — The crisis of the events that determined the way Paul should go to Rome.

Emperor of Rome, was Nero.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The effect of the two years' imprisonment on Paul and his work.
Festus, the new governor.
King Herod Agrippa.
The crisis that determined the way that Paul should go to Rome.
The new plot to kill Paul.
The attitude of Festus toward Paul.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Farrar's *St. Paul,* pp. 551–554; and the books named in the last two lessons.

Ramsay's *St. Paul the Traveller,* p. 301, etc. "The Crisis in the Fate of Paul."

Maurice Jones' *St. Paul the Orator.*

LEARN BY HEART.

Rom. 8 : 28 ; Acts 23 : 12.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Appeal to Cæsar. Another Advance toward Paul's Desire to bring the Gospel to Rome.

I. Paul's Two Years in Prison at Cæsarea.
II. Governor Festus, and the New Plot to Kill Paul, vs. 1–6.
III. The Appeal to Cæsar, vs. 7–12.
IV. King Agrippa and Bernice Visit Governor Festus at Cæsarea, vs. 13–22.

I. **PAUL'S TWO YEARS IN PRISON AT CÆSAREA.** This imprisonment under the circumstances, with so much freedom, with his friends and helpers free to visit and care for him, was doubtless the best thing that could happen to Paul for the complete fulfilment of his work.

From a photograph by Bonfils.

Cæsarea-on-the-Sea.

Ruins of prison where St. Paul was confined for two years.

1. He was sickly and worn out, and needed rest. Luke, his physician, was with him. He probably would not have taken this rest unless he had been compelled by circumstances beyond his control ; and the result would have been physical unfitness for the work he had to do in Rome.

Read what Paul had endured, as reported by him in 2 Cor. 11 : 23–28. And refer back to Lesson 10 of the Third Quarter.

2. During these two years, as well as during his imprisonment in Rome, Paul had an opportunity " such as he never had before, of realizing, digesting, and assimilating in all their fulness the doctrines he had so long proclaimed to others."

For almost 20 years Paul had been living a most intense and strenuous life, crowded full of labors that would have crushed an ordinary man. He was learning the Gospel and its principles by experience, by their application to all classes of men, under every variety of circumstances. But now he was forced to see everything from another point of view. Every active life needs periods of rest, as trees and plants need the winter rest in order to bear the most and the best fruit. There are two parts to our intellectual and our spiritual natures, and they require rest, reflection, meditation, devotion, as well as active use.

If you wish good flowers from a hyacinth bulb, you must put it away in the dark for weeks in order that it may become thoroughly rooted before the flower stalk rises into bloom. You will notice on the trees in autumn the buds which after sleeping all winter burst into leaves and blossoms in the spring. Why this long winter sleep is necessary I do not know. But it has its parallel in the operations of the mind. Dr. William M. Taylor, in showing ministers how to prepare their sermons, gives his experience thus : " He will have work enough for two mornings at least in reading over in the original the passage that is to come in course on the next Sunday, and in carefully weighing all that has been written upon it by the commentators whose works are on his shelves. Let him mark the thoughts that are of special importance in each, and read on until he is, as it were, saturated with his theme. Then in a wonderful way — which I can never explain to myself — he will find that, by the time he has read all his books of reference, his own thoughts have begun to crystallize, and perhaps all at once, almost with the rapidity of an electric discharge, the whole plan will open up to him." It was this crystallization of the experiences of years, this unconscious cerebration, this bursting into blossom of the sleeping buds, that Paul gained during these two years. He was thus prepared to write the seven later epistles.

Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Cesarea to Jerusalem.

2. Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him,

3. And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him.

4. But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly *thither*.

5. Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with *me*, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.

It is well for every teacher and scholar in the Sunday School to use this time-saving and illuminating plan, by planting the lesson in his mind early in the week.

Before this imprisonment Paul had written six epistles, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians and Romans.

3. There was another great advantage to Paul that during this time he could have friends to visit him. Philip the evangelist and deacon, whose home was in Cæsarea, was one of the earliest Christians converted at Pentecost, and familiar with the beginnings of the Christian community. Philip could tell Paul and Luke the whole story of those early days.

Thus Luke who was to write not only his Gospel, but also the Acts, would be able to obtain the whole story from eye witnesses, and take notes so that he could write the accounts with accuracy. Probably no other person could do it as well.

4. In no other way could Paul have reached the leading officials and educated men of the Romans and of the Jews, to preach the Gospel of Jesus to them. Through the whole early history of Christianity, the officials and leaders, Jews and Romans, were reached through the attacks upon the Christians by their enemies.

Compare the story of Bunyan in his prison. He could not understand why God should thus allow him to be shut out from his work for the best twelve years of his life, his soul longing to preach the gospel, and thousands waiting to hear him. He could not then see, what now is plain, that by the *Pilgrim's Progress* he there wrote, he has been preaching to millions instead of thousands, and for centuries instead of years.

So also the story of Luther when shut up in the Wartburg castle with "Liberty." "Difficulties are the stones out of which all God's houses are built." — *Faber.*

II. **GOVERNOR FESTUS AND THE NEW PLOT TO KILL PAUL**, vs. 1–6. "When two full years had passed over Paul's head in light and privileged confinement, Felix was recalled to Rome. The Jews' complaints against his greed and injustice had brought about this result. Festus, his successor, arrived in Cæsarea during the summer of A.D. 59. Then again there was enacted a scene similar to the trial before Felix two years previously, the Jews accusing Paul, and bringing many charges against him, without any witnesses to prove their case." — *Ramsay.*

The new governor was in every way a better man than Felix. He "had a straightforward honesty about him which forms a strong contrast to the mean rascality of his predecessor. He certainly did not do all the justice that he might have done; but, allowing somewhat for the natural desire to ingratiate himself with the people of his government, his conduct, on the whole, was exemplary, and his firmness in resisting the unjust demands of the Jews cannot fail to elicit our admiration." — *Lewin.*

1. **After three days**, from his landing at Cæsarea at the end of his voyage from Rome. This allows one day for rest and two for his journey to Jerusalem.

2. **Then the high priest** (Am. R., "the chief priests"), **and the chief** (Am. R., "principal men") **of the Jews informed him against Paul**, repeating such charges as Tertullus had falsely made (see last Lesson).

3. **Desired** Festus as a **favour** — not justice — to the Jews, **that he would send for him** from Cæsarea and bring him **to Jerusalem** for trial. For there where Paul's enemies were many and intensely bitter against him, they would have him in their power, if they failed in their plot to murder him on the way.

4. **But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cæsarea**, since he himself should be at the trial, and he was not intending to remain at Jerusalem.

5. But he would grant a fair trial for all, and hence he invited all who were **able**, "them that are of power among you" (Am. R.), to go down to Cæsarea with him,

6. And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Cesarea; and the next day, sitting on the judgment seat, commanded Paul to be brought.

7. And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.

8. While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cesar, have I offended any thing at all.

9. But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

10. Then said Paul, I stand at Cesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

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and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness, " anything amiss " (Am. R.) **in him.**

6. **More than ten days.** The better reading is " not more than eight or ten days " (Am. R.). **And the next day**, showing by his promptness that he considered the case of considerable importance. And he would please the Jews who had come with him from Jerusalem, by paying immediate attention to the case they felt to be important. He immediately opened the Court and summoned the witnesses.

Illustration. At a Christian Endeavor convention the then secretary of the U. S. Navy department began his address with this story : " Many years ago a story was told of a well-known professional politician in Baltimore, now dead, who, on his return from church one Sunday, was met by a newspaper reporter, who remarked to him, in substance, ' Mr. A., I do not understand how so regular an attendant at church as you are can be also so great an adept in " stuffing " ballot-boxes, " fixing " juries and witnesses, and " plugging " corporations.'

" ' Mr. B.,' replied the statesman, ' I never mix up politics and religion.' "

The high priest, and the leaders of the Jews who were attacking Paul, made the same fatal mistake. The separation of business or pleasure, or politics from religion, instead of making religion the leaven to permeate and transform politics and pleasure, and business and the whole life, is fatal to any one who does it, as it was the ruin of the Jewish nation in Palestine.

III. **THE APPEAL TO CÆSAR**, vs. 7–12. When Festus returned from Jerusalem to Cæsarea he found that the Jewish leaders apparently had gone there in advance, and immediately **stood round about him**, in his court of justice. *The Jews* **laid many and grievous complaints** (Am. R., " charges ") **against Paul**, but without bringing a single witness to prove their assertions. They were doubtless the same old charges that they had brought before Felix through Tertullus, two years before, as we learn from Paul's denial in the next verse ; and which now, as then, **they could not prove.**

Paul was also permitted to **answer for himself.** He declared that he had broken neither the Jewish law, nor the Roman law.

Festus, **willing to do the Jews a favor** (Am. R., " desiring to gain **favor with the Jews** "), said, **Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?** This was practically an acquittal of Paul from the charge that would come under the cognizance of the Roman law. There remained only such charges as would naturally come before the Sanhedrin. The question was whether Paul would accept an informal acquittal from the Roman court on condition that he submit to a trial before his own people on the other counts. And this trial would be in Festus' presence, who would see that he was treated fairly, as a Roman citizen.

Festus wished to throw upon Paul the responsibility of refusing to go to Jerusalem, while he himself would not displease the Jews. He well knew that Paul could say " No," by his rights as a Roman citizen.

Paul, indignantly, standing up " four square to all the winds that blow,"

> "Strong of will,
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

I am standing before Cesar's judgment seat (Am. R.), **where I ought to be judged : to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou** also **very well knowest ; if then I am a**

11. For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cesar.

12. Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cesar? unto Cesar shalt thou go.

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wrongdoer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die : but if none of those things is true, whereof these accuse me, no man can give me up unto them. I appeal unto Cesar (Am. R.).

Festus: after having conferred with the council of Roman officials, — **Thou hast appealed unto Cesar. Unto Cesar shalt thou go.** " The dilemma put by Paul is as follows : I am either guilty or not guilty : if guilty, I can be legally tried and condemned, not by them, but by Cæsar, at whose tribunal I stand, and I shall acquiesce in the sentence ; but if not guilty, no man can deliver me, a Roman citizen, into their power : and therefore, guilty or not guilty, I shall not be judged by them." — *Rendall.*

Temple of Janus on Coin of Nero

with the legend, "Pace per Terram Marique partâ Janum clusit." ("Peace being acquired on land and sea he closed Janus.")

Stop, Look, Listen.

1. Paul, though pursued to the death by the Jewish rulers, never abused the rulers of his nation. However much he was tempted to say with Walpole, " I should love my country if it were not for my countrymen," his " heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was that they might be saved " (Rom. 10 : 1) ; and he said, " I could wish that myself were accursed (separated) from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh " (Rom. 9 : 3).

2. Even if Festus should acquit and release Paul, the Jews could fall upon him by assassins, as they had twice planned to do, at Jerusalem (23 : 12) and at Cæsarea (25 : 3).

3. Therefore it was plain to Paul that his only safety lay in going to a distant court, which was entirely free from Jewish influence and whither his accusers would not be likely to go.

4. Festus unconsciously aided the fulfilment of God's promise to Paul that he should go to Rome.

5. Paul no doubt saw in this appeal an opportunity of accomplishing his long-cherished desire of going to Rome (19 : 21) and realizing the Lord's promise to him that he should preach the gospel there (23 : 11). " We can but suppose that a sudden inspiration opened his eyes to the path by which he might be carried to the long-desired goal of his hopes at Rome." — *William Smith, New Test. Hist.*

6. It is well to notice how strong and manly Paul had grown through this period of trial. The Christians in these times of persecution, had need of such a leader. Of Paul they could say with the Clan-Alpine warriors who believed in the intensified power of their brave leader, —

> "One blast upon his bugle horn
> Were worth a thousand men."

What Christians need for themselves and their leaders is " not so much more men, as more MAN."

Changing one word in Tennyson's *Bugle Song*, most of us must feel, concerning our echoes,

> "O Love, they die on yon rich sky,
> They faint on hill or field or river."

But Paul's

> " echoes roll from soul to soul,
> And grow forever and forever."

7. Paul's sincere and open character, guileless, aboveboard, was one means of his safety and power. He had nothing to conceal. It is equally manly, wise and trustworthy to-day.

Two words that got married is the title of one of Rev. Frank T. Bailey's short sermons, for the young. Here it is, but of necessity somewhat condensed.

" Words sometimes marry, as people do. And, like people, they sometimes go afterwards to live in another country. Our two words once lived in Rome, the city of

brave armies and splendid history. They were not very young when they married and moved to England. And since then they have come to America to live. Before I tell you their names, which would sound strange to you, I must tell you a little about them and how they came to marry. Many splendid palaces were in Rome, built by rich men for their homes.

" Some of the builders were not honest in their work. Finding an imperfection in a block of marble, they filled the chink with wax, colored like the stone ; and then they would build it into some out of the way place. For a while the deception would not be discovered. But when the heat and frost came, the wax would fall away and the cheat would become known.

" So the nobles learned to put into their building contracts two little words, *sine cera*, meaning ' without wax.' . . . When they came to England they changed the family name a little.

" The name now is *Sincerity*. But the meaning is the same.

" Our good American word ' Sincerity,' then, is the new married name of the old Roman words, ' *sine cera*.' And it means the same thing : without wax, the real thing, without sham or pretense ; just honesty." — *Congregationalist*.

IV. **KING AGRIPPA AND HIS SISTER–WIFE BERNICE VISIT GOVERNOR FESTUS AT CÆSAREA ; AND THEY CONFER ON THE CASE OF PAUL**, vs. 13–22. *King Agrippa*, whose full name was Herod Agrippa II, was the brother-in-law of Felix who married Agrippa's sister Drusilla. Agrippa married his own sister, the beautiful and attractive Ber nī'cē who came with him on this visit to Festus.

He was king of the northern part of Palestine and the adjoining regions of Syria to the north with his capital at Cæsarea Philippi in the foothills of the Lebanon Mountains.

He was a Jew as of course was Bernice, trained in the religious ceremonies and teachings of the Jews, but he " never mixed politics and religion," and " wore his Judaism as a garment made to order."

His Father was Herod Agrippa I, who slew James the elder, the apostle, with the sword ; and not long after, having at this same Cæsarea " paraded himself as a little god, was smitten by a terrible disease, ' because he gave not God the Glory,' and died in great agony (Acts 12) A.D. 42, 16 years earlier." *His great grandfather* was Herod the Great, who caused the massacre of the innocents (Matt. 2) and perished soon after. His great uncle Herod Antipas murdered John the Baptist. " Did Agrippa think of his great grandfather Herod, of his great uncle Antipas, of his father Agrippa ? Did he recall the fact that they had each died or been disgraced soon after, or in direct consequence of, those inflictions of martyrdom ? "

14. **And when they had been there many days**, Gk., " *more* days than were necessary for fulfilling the purpose of their visit. They stayed on some days longer." — *Alford*. **Festus declared Paul's cause unto**, better as Am. R., " laid Paul's case before," **the king**. He told the facts of the case as they came before him. The questions that were at issue clearly turned on Mosaic technicalities, which Agrippa could well understand, but with which Festus was not familiar.

" I should have liked myself also to hear this person," said Agrippa. Festus eagerly closed with this wish, and said, **To-morrow thou shalt hear him**.

Thus once more Paul had the opportunity of preaching the Gospel to " Gentiles and kings, royal personages, imperial officials from the governor downward, military officers of all ranks, and a crowd of nobilities, Gentile and Jewish." — *St. Paul the Orator*.

Well might they and we take to heart James Russell Lowell's great poem, of which two stanzas are given here.

" Once to every man or nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goat upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light.

" Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne —
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

LESSON IV. — October 22.

PAUL'S DEFENCE BEFORE AGRIPPA. — Acts 26.

PRINT vs. 1, 24–32. COMMIT vs. 28, 29.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.*—Acts 26 : 19.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

See that each member of the class brings to the class, or finds there, a clear mental picture of the scene this lesson presents, with each individual, or cluster of individuals, so distinct that he could name them and see what each one does, as if he were present in that audience room.

Then in the consideration of the closing studies in which the leading actors of this lesson and the two previous ones, are presented, let each scholar take the advice of Editor C. G. Trumbull of the *Sunday School Times :*

" The interest of any class in its Bible study depends in the long run on whether, as Dr. C. R. Watson has said, the Bible is used as a music-box or as a telephone. If it is only a music-box, with a certain number of tunes that we have heard over and over again, we are sure to get tired of those tunes. But if we let it be a telephone, through which our Lord Jesus Christ himself is always ready to speak to us, we shall find that it always has a new message spoken directly by God to our own present need."

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 18, 28, 29.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The scene of Paul's address.
Why he told so many times the story of his conversion.
Hard to kick against the pricks.
The life purpose of Paul, v. 18.
Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.
The attitude toward Christianity, of Paul; the Sanhedrin; Felix; Festus; Agrippa.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

The usual *Commentaries.* Books on *The Acts,* and on *St. Paul.* Ramsay's *Pictures of the Apostolic Church.* Maurice Jones on *St. Paul the Orator.* Farrar's *St. Paul.* Peloubet's *Suggestive Illustrations* on Acts (Holman, Philadelphia). Pliny's " Letters to Trajan," quoted in Josephus' *Antiquities,* and in Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire.*

Maclaren's *Expositions* have many excellent and effective truths for the teacher to bring to his class.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — A.D. 59, probably in August. The next day after the last lesson.

Place. — The Great Audience Hall of Festus' Palace in Cæsarea.

Nero, emperor of Roman Empire.

Vatican, Rome.
Bust of Nero.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Five Prominent Men Illustrating Five Different Ways of Treating the Gospel.

I. The Scene in the Great Audience Hall at Cæsarea, 25 : 23–27.

II. Paul Preaches the Gospel to this Assembly, vs. 1–23.

III. Five Ways of Treating the Gospel Illustrated by the Attitude of Five Men we have been Studying.
- The High Priest.
- Governor Felix.
- Governor Festus.
- King Agrippa.
- The Apostle Paul.

I. **THE SCENE IN THE GREAT AUDIENCE HALL**, 25 : 23–27. "*The scene* was to be in the Palace, not in the hall of justice [for this was not a trial of Paul's innocence or guilt] but in the Auditorium or Hall of Hearing, the hall devoted to matters of public ceremonial, oratorical displays, and similar shows." — *Rackham.* It was the same hall in which Agrippa's father King Agrippa I., heard the people shouting that he was a god, and not a man, and the angel of the Lord smote him with a deadly disease (Acts 12).

"Festus ordered the auditorium to be prepared for the occasion, and invited all the chief officers of the army, and the principal inhabitants of the town. The Herods were fond of show, and Festus gratified their humor by a grand processional display. He would doubtless appear in his scarlet paludament [the short red mantle of Roman generals, fastened on the left shoulder, and worn over the armor (*Harper's Classical Dic.*)] with his full attendance of lictors and body-guards, who would stand at arms behind the gilded chairs which were placed for himself and his distinguished visitors. We are expressly told that Agrippa and Bërenī'cē went in state, . . . she, doubtless, blazing with all her jewels, and he in his purple robes, and both with the circlets of royalty around their foreheads, and attended by a suite of followers in the most gorgeous apparel of Eastern pomp." — *Farrar.*

Paul before Agrippa.

Paul chained to his guardian soldier stood near by, the noblest Roman of them all. A man of recognized ability, the leader of the Christian churches which he had founded in various large cities, an orator, a Roman citizen of rank, apparently able to support himself, as Ramsay fairly argues. All eyes were upon him, the centre of interest to the whole audience.

Festus states the object of this gathering. Festus arose before this brilliant assembly, and stated the object of their coming together. The prisoner had been vehemently accused as one worthy of death. He had appealed to Cesar and must be sent to Rome. But Festus, not being well acquainted with Jewish laws and customs, could not make out any definite charge against him that would be a reasonable excuse for sending him as a prisoner to Rome. "Now," he said, "you who are well acquainted with these things, find out what charges should be made against him."

Agrippa, to whom Festus appears to have given charge of the meeting, **said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself.** The Greek verb means *to defendor justify one's self* in the eyes of another.

II. **PAUL PREACHES THE GOSPEL TO THIS ASSEMBLY**, vs. 1–23. "Of all the apostle's utterances this is the most finished and elaborate in style, and it represents the high-water mark of his oratory." — *St. Paul the Orator.* It was full of intense earnestness, flowing from a full heart, and an unconquerable love for the Master, and His Cause, and for the salvation of the people before him. "Paul was now launched on the full tide of that sacred and impassioned oratory which was so powerful an agent in his mission work." — *Farrar.*

Observe (1) that the address was an argument from his own experience. He spoke that which he knew. He himself was a living *fact*, the wondrous change in his own

life wrought by Jesus his risen Lord. This is an example of one of the most effective ways of teaching and preaching, for it is teaching and preaching from one's own experience, from what the man is.

Men do not so much need more light, as more heat. "It is the ruling passion of the burning heart that is needed in the world to-day, if we are to be men of great endeavor." — *Dr. Alexander.* "Did not our hearts burn within us as he opened unto us the Scriptures?" (Luke 24 : 32).

(2) Especially in this case, Paul stood before them a living miracle, an "incarnate argument." Jesus Christ must be living and divine to work such a change. You stumble at the doctrine of the resurrection. "I know it is a marvellous thing that God should raise the dead, but God has raised me from the dead, — I was dead in trespasses and sins, — and that change in me is as great a miracle as to raise one from the grave."

(3) Paul's plea was for the Romans as well as for the Jews; it was light, salvation, forgiveness for his audience and for his accusers. He set before them a glorious hope of deliverance from sin and Satan, and all the powers of darkness and remorse, and a glorious inheritance among them that are sanctified.

Introduction. "The prisoner, with an orator's gesture, fettered as he was, addressed the king with the dignity and self-possession that was his birthright, without servility, and yet with courtly deference. Beginning by paying a compliment to the king's familiarity with 'the customs and questions which are among the Jews,' he said only what was true, but he said it with polished and graceful courtesy." — *Ramsay.*

He "bore without abuse
The grand old name of gentleman."

"No more he feels upon his high-raised arm
The ponderous chain, than does the playful child
The bracelet formed of many a flowery link;
Heedless of self, forgetful that his life
Is now to be defended by his words,
He only thinks of doing good to them
That seek his life."

First Division, vs. 4–8. *Paul declares that he is a true Jew of the strictest sect*, as the Jews well knew if they would testify, **that after the straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.** He was no renegade to his race and nation.

Moreover, the very soul of their religion that had sustained them in all their trials and disasters for more than a thousand years, was the **hope of the promise** of a Messiah King who would save them from their enemies and make them a great and glorious nation, as pictured by Isaiah and Daniel. For this hope **the twelve tribes** were **earnestly serving God day and night.** I too believe in the same Hope and Promise. But I not only believe in their hope and promise, I also believe that the hope has been realized, and the promise fulfilled in Jesus the crucified and risen again from the dead. And I have seen him, and the wonderful works he has been doing. **For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.**

Second Division, vs. 9–15. Paul tells the audience that he himself was once a more zealous persecutor of the Christians than are the Jews who now are persecuting him, **being exceedingly mad against them.** But all at once he had been transformed in the midst of his persecution by Jesus himself. He was drawing near to Damascus with authority from the chief priests to persecute the Christians there when **at midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.**

And I said, Who art thou, Lord?

And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks, the sharp points of the ox-goad. "The Palestine farmer when ploughing has one hand on the plough-handle, and with the other he holds the ox-goad. This is a fairly straight rod about seven feet long, made frequently from the oak or almond tree. It is furnished at one end with a chisel-shaped piece of iron about one and a half inches broad, for pushing away the clay that sticks to the share of the plow, and at the other it has a nail with which the farmer keeps the oxen moving on, and by poking one or the other of them with it he can make the plough curve in and out among the fig-trees and mulberry-trees where he is ploughing. The sudden stimulus on the flank sometimes makes an ox kick out with the result that what was meant to be a mere touch becomes a painful stab." — *Rev. George Mackie, of Beyrout* in *Sun. Schl. Times.* The metaphor "was common in Greek and Roman

writings. Thus, Euripides (' Bacchæ,' 791) : ' Being enraged, I would kick against the goads, a mortal against a god.' Plautus (' Truculentus, 4, 2, 55) : ' If you strike the goads with your fists, you hurt your hands more than the goads.' "

The meaning of the metaphor seems to be that the more you resist the power that is urging you on to obey the more painful it will be. It is no use to resist. It implies that Paul had for some time been struggling against his conscience and the call of God. This shows with what difficulty, against what obstacles within and without, Paul made his decision to accept Christ.

Ploughing in Palestine.

Third Division. The Aim and Purpose of the Religion of Jesus. The Jesus who had appeared to Paul showed him his mission : he was to be a servant, a minister of Jesus to carry out His purposes, and a witness of the facts he had seen, and of whatever Jesus should hereafter reveal to him, by visions and through Paul's experiences.

Delivering thee. The verb means both *to choose out, to select* one from many, and also *to rescue, to deliver*. Most commentators take it here in the latter sense. " Though they may and will seize upon thee and persecute thee, yet I am with thee and will save thee from their hands. From the first the Apostle knew that in every city persecution was to be his lot." — *Cambridge Bible, Rackham*, etc. " It pledged to him the security which he needed for the accomplishment of his work until his work was done." — *Professor Hackett.*

Many were his deliverances from both Jews and Gentiles. Paul was sent to both Jews and Gentiles to bring to them greater blessings than they had ever known or conceived. This is true for the young to-day. See that they know and realize these good gifts of God.

1. **To open their eyes.** For both Jews and Gentiles were like blind men feeling their way while the sunlight was all around them ; or like those who close their blinds and draw their curtains to shut out every ray of light from their homes. To both St. Paul proclaimed the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4 : 6 ; Ephes. 1 : 18.

2. **To turn them from darkness to light.** The darkness of ignorance and sin. They did not see God, nor holiness, nor true life, nor true morality, nor eternal life, nor the way to heaven. Christ opened their eyes to see these glorious truths. " Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path " (Ps. 119: 105). Jesus is " the Light of the World " (John 9 : 5).

Lamp from Pompeii.

At Pompeii, which was destroyed by an eruption of Vesuvius about 10 years after this address by Paul, have been found foot lamps, showing how the Pompeians placed a lamp on the toe of their shoes or sandals, so that the light would shine upon the path and reveal every serpent or rock or precipice in the way. So we should know God's Word so thoroughly that in every danger or temptation, every question of right or wrong, some verse or truth of the Bible shall shine upon our path, and give us light.

3. **To turn them from the power of Satan,** the inveterate adversary of God and all good, the head of the kingdom of evil, and of the whole hierarchy of evil spirits and evil influences. See Eph. 1 : 21 ; 6 : 12 ; Col. 2 : 15 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 9 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 14. They were members of Satan's kingdom, serving him, living according to his principles, and going on to his reward. **Unto God.** The gospel Paul preached was to lead them into the kingdom of God, to love God with all their hearts, and their neighbor as

THEN Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

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themselves; to live according to God's laws, to receive his nature, to be endowed with his spirit and his glory.

4. **That they may receive forgiveness of sins**, the past sins blotted out, and the love of sin washed away.

5. **And inheritance among them which are sanctified**, made holy, and thus fitted for their inheritance. A faith that does not sanctify cannot save. "We are saved not in sin, but from sin."

The Inheritance of the Saints. (1) It is not earned, but inherited by becoming a child of God. (2) It is an inheritance of God's nature. (3) It is an inheritance of his fatherly love and care. (4) It is an inheritance of his possessions and his home. (5) It is an inheritance with the glorious company of his saints. (6) It is the richest, the happiest, the most glorious, the most desirable of all-conceivable possessions.

It was this which made it worth while for Paul to live the life he had lived; and all this his audience may gain by accepting Jesus the ever-living Messiah, as their Teacher, Guide, and Lord.

Fourth Division. Paul was obedient to the Heavenly Vision, vs. 19–23. He carried the message of the Lord to Damascus, to Jerusalem, to Judea, but chiefly to the Gentiles, urging them (1) to **repent**, (2) to **turn to God**, renouncing Satan and his kingdom for the kingdom of God, — and (3) to **do works meet for repentance**. The works which are the natural fruit of true repentance. The fruit is the *proof* of the tree. With Paul, as with James, faith and works went together. They are inseparably joined.

21. **For these causes the Jews . . . went about to kill me**, not because he had done any thing wrong, but (1) because he called on these Jews to repent. He troubled their consciences. (2) Especially because he delivered the gospel message to the Gentiles without their submitting to the Jewish ceremonial laws, thus placing them on an equality before God, — which was his unpardonable sin in the eyes of the Jews, but a reason why the Romans should acquit him. God had helped him, so that **I continue to** (Am. R., "stand unto") **this day testifying both to small and great**, rich and poor, learned and unlearned Gentile and Jew, Pharisee and publican. The glory of Christianity is that it ignores class distinctions, and gives its message to all.

(Read and tell the little story of *The Mansion*, by Dr. Henry Van Dyke.)

> "No more alone to sage or monarch given,
> For all his nail-pierced hand flung back the gates of heaven."

Once more Paul refers to the foretold Messiah that **should suffer** on the cross for our sins, the highest proof of his love, and **rise** again our ever-living Savior, Leader, Example and victorious king.

III. **FIVE WAYS OF TREATING THE GOSPEL, ILLUSTRATED BY THE ATTITUDE OF FIVE MEN WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING OF LATE**, vs. 24–32.

First. The High Priest's Way, — who hated it, opposed it, persecuted Christians, and tried to kill Paul its missionary. (See the previous lessons.)

Second. Felix' Way, **Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.** Although he trembled at Paul's preaching of righteousness, self-control and a judgment to come, yet his love of money led him to commune often with Paul hoping that Paul or his friends would give him money to release him. "As Felix was a man of high position and wealth, brother of the richest man in Rome, and husband of a Princess, he could not have thought of a paltry bribe." — *Ramsay.*

> "Belshazzar, Babylonian king of old . . .
> Saw visionary fingers of a hand
> Come out upon the palace walls and write
> . . . . . .
> Thus, O Lord Felix, in our hours of feast,
> Oft, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN, . . .
> Appalling words of final doom from God,
> In lurid letters live along the walls
> Of the soul's pleasure house — for who will heed!
>
> Remorse, doubts, recoils, forebodings, fears,
> And fearful looking for of judgment nigh, —
> These are handwritings on the wall from God;
> They, syllabling the sentence of His ire,
> Spell MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN,
> For pleasure-lovers lost in lust and pride."
> — Professor Wilkinson's *Epic of Paul.*

Third. Festus' Way, vs. 24–26. When Paul came to the place in his address where he presented the Messiah as suffering and dying on the cross, and as raised from the dead, and now living, and showing (Am. R., "proclaiming") **light unto the**

24. And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.

25. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

26. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

27. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

28. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

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people (the Jews) **and to the Gentiles** all this "seemed so absurd and incredible to the rough Roman officer, that Festus rudely interrupted the speaker by loudly calling out, 'Paul, you may be a great philosopher, but you have no common sense.' Festus had no prejudice against Paul; but regarded him with good-humored contempt as an unpractical enthusiast." — *Ramsay.*

Much learning, — literally "many writings," perhaps referring to the books of the Scripture, with which Festus was unacquainted, having never read them, — **doth make** (Am. R., "is turning") **thee mad**, a lunatic, a dreamer, living in the atmosphere of wild imagings.

"The tenants of a mad-house often think all others deranged but themselves; but there is no madness so great, no delirium so awful, as to neglect the eternal interest of the soul for the sake of the poor pleasures and honors which this life can give."— *Barnes.*

What a dreamer of fancies Paul must have seemed to Festus, that he could possibly imagine that he, a Jew, could give light to the Greeks and Romans with their immortal literature.

25. I am not mad, etc. "This reply of Paul is unsurpassed as a model of Christian courtesy and self-command. This missionary is faithful, but he is never harsh."

Most noble Festus (Am. R., "most excellent" = your excellency). **I am not mad, . . . but speak forth (the) words of truth and soberness.** From Festus' standpoint, that of worldliness, the words of Paul were the fancies of a crazy, unbalanced brain; but from Paul's standpoint, that of eternal life and spiritual life, they were simply true and earnest.

Paul then appeals to King Agrippa to confirm his statement. v. 26. **For the king knoweth of these things. . . . For I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.** For us in our day the whole history of Christianity for nearly two thousand years proves that Paul spoke literally **words of truth and soberness.**

"**Who is the 'crazy man'?** He who lives for this world, or he who lives for eternity?

"Yorick was the jolliest jester the king ever had. His majesty said to him one day, 'Here, Yorick, you take my cane, and keep it until you find a bigger fool than you are yourself.' Yorick carried the cane for many a day.

"In due course the old king came to his dying bed. He sent for his jester. 'Yorick, your old master is going to leave you soon.'

"'And where are you going, sire?'

"'I am going away to another country, Yorick.'

"'And has your majesty made all your preparations for the journey?'

"'Alas, I have not, Yorick.'

"'Here, your majesty, take the cane. At last I have found a bigger fool than I am myself. I only trifle with the things of time, but you have trifled with the things of eternity.'" — *Sun. School Times.*

Fourth. Agrippa's Way, vs. 27–29. **King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?** Agrippa, as a Jew, had been instructed in the Scriptures, and accepted them intellectually, however little effect they had upon his conduct. But if he believed the Scriptures, then Paul could prove from those premises the truth of the gospel he was preaching. Paul had good authority for asserting **I know that thou believest.**

28. Agrippa replies, **Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian**, Am. R., "With little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Christian." Most modern

29. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

30. And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them.

31. And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.

32. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cesar.

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critics contend that the Greek word translated "Almost," means "in a little," "with a little," and not "almost"; and the phrase means "'with a little' time or effort or persuasion persuadest thou me to be a Christian?" The meaning would then be the sarcasm, "You are trying to persuade me offhand to be a Christian." Maclaren interprets it thus: "You seem to think that with a little effort you can make me — so great a man as I am — a Christian, — that miserable set of fanatics." Alford regards the words as a "cynical sneer. *Thou art trying to make a Christian of me with very few words on very slender grounds*, would be the nearest paraphrase of his derisive answer to St. Paul's appeal." Do you expect in one brief speech to make me a Christian? ME *a Christian! (with a capital M)*. "'You are trying to persuade me offhand to be a Christian,' said Agrippa, with a half-suppressed smile; and this finished specimen of pleasantry was his bantering answer to St. Paul's appeal. Doubtless his polished remark sounded very witty to that distinguished company, and they would with difficulty suppress their laughter at the notion that Agrippa, favorite of Claudius, and friend of Nero, should succumb to Paul. That a Paul should make the king a *Christian* would sound too ludicrous." — *Farrar.*

Paul, with perfect dignity, took advantage of Agrippa's ambiguous expression and with all the sincerity of a loving heart **said, I would to God that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day might become such as I am, except** (raising his fettered hands) **these bonds** (Am. R.).

Such as I am. Paul the prisoner had much more than the brilliant assemblage before him. (1) They had worldly wealth; he had treasures in heaven, spiritual riches. (2) They had honor and applause from men; he had the approval of God. (3) They had luxury and sensual delights; he had joys, and peace, and delights beyond their highest dreams. (4) They had worldly crowns; he had a crown of glory in the heavens. (5) They had hearts of unrest, and consciences ill at ease; he was abiding in perfect peace as a child of God. (6) They had a Roman tyrant for their master, whom they feared; he had the blessed Jesus, whom he loved. (7) Their possessions would last but a little time; his forever and ever.

Save These Bonds. Like Paul, we wish all men to have the blessings of our religion "save these bonds": (1) the bonds of ignorance; (2) the bonds of imperfection; (3) the bonds of our old nature; (4) the bonds of error and mistakes.

Almost Persuaded. The common version implies that Agrippa's better nature was touched, and that he spoke sincerely, saying in effect, if you go on a little longer, and speak many more such words, you will persuade even me.

"Our hymn, 'Almost persuaded,' is based on this interpretation. Whether this be exactly right or no, the truth remains the same, that there are often cases where a man is almost persuaded to become a Christian, who yet stops there, and never goes any farther."

"'Almost persuaded,' come, come to-day;
'Almost persuaded,' turn not away.
Jesus invites you here,
Angels are lingering near,
Prayers rise from hearts so dear;
O wanderer, come!

"'Almost persuaded,' harvest is past!
'Almost persuaded,' doom comes at last
'Almost' cannot avail;
'Almost' is but to fail!
Sad, sad, that bitter wail —
'Almost, *but lost!*'" — *P. P. Bliss.*

Dante on being Neutral in Religion. "Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side?" Exodus 32 : 26.

"In Dante's great poem, the neutrals, those who in this world had never taken a side, occupy the mouth and vestibule of hell. There they swirl unceasingly in clouds of red sand, their faces bitten by wasps and hornets. They pursue in a blind fatal way a flag which never stays for a moment in one place. Dante denies them the moral

dignity of a place even in hell itself. ' Heaven will not have them, and the deep hell receives them not,' lest the wicked, looking at these neutrals, should be able to feel that there were souls worse than themselves.

" And what was the sin of these neutrals ? Oh, simply this: they had never taken a side. They had spent God's precious moment, which is our life, they had spent it watching which way the wind was likely to blow. They had been neither for one side nor the other, but only for themselves.

" In the laws of Solon, Plutarch tells us, there was an enactment which breathes the same indignation against those who in the great battle of life stand aside and take no part. Solon decreed, and Athens approved of it as wise and safe, that in the event of an insurrection breaking out in the streets, those people should be put to death who merely looked on, who took no part in it, on one side or the other." — *Advance*, quoted from Revell's *At Close Quarters*.

Fifth. Paul's Way. Paul saw Jesus, and believed on him as his Saviour, Leader and Friend.

He obeyed the heavenly vision, and his obedience transformed his whole life.

He spent his whole life in winning men to Jesus and training them into the character of Jesus and in His service.

He was a true soldier of Jesus, overcoming evil with good, fighting against all the evils of the world.

Verse 18 expresses the work of his life for his fellow men, as we have seen.

So that when he came to the close of his life he could say : " I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith :

" Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day : and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4 : 7, 8.)

These five men are now placed before us.

Which of these men will we strive to grow like ?

Which of their careers do we choose for our own ?

LESSON V. — October 29.

THE VOYAGE. — Acts 27 : 1–38.

PRINT vs. 13–26. COMMIT vs. 22–24.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Commit thy way unto Jehovah ;*
Trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass. — Ps. 37 : 5.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The map will be most useful in this lesson.

Either have a good sized map on the table around which the class gather (I pity the class that does not have a table), or see that each scholar has a small map such as is usually found in the quarterlies, or outline maps can be obtained at a low price — one cent a copy — from W. A. Wilde Co., Boston.

Each scholar can trace the voyage on his map, and point out the places, and tell what occurred in them, giving the modern names as well as the ancient ones. This plan will keep each event in the memory, with the practical applications.

LEARN BY HEART.

Psalm 107 : 28–31.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Trace out the voyage on the map.
How this voyage revealed the character of Paul.
The help this gave to Paul on his arrival at Rome.
Paul's vision of cheer, and how it helped the other passengers.
Life compared to a voyage.
Why God permits such storms to come upon us.
What visions of cheer he sends.
The promise of safety and the use of means.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

All the *Commentaries on Acts*, and all *Lives of St. Paul.*

Ramsay's St. Paul the Traveller gives the views of one who has spent many years in visiting and studying the region. Farrar's *St. Paul* describes the voyage with vividness and essential accuracy.

The most thorough discussion of this lesson is by James Smith, of Jordanhill, Eng., in his *Voyage and Shipwreck of St.*

Paul. Conybeare and Howson, and Lewin, in his *St. Paul* and in his *Fasti Sacri*, are very complete.

Ancient ships, by Cecil Torr of Cambridge, England, is a masterly study.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — St. Paul sailed from Cæsarea, August 17 A.D 59 (*Ramsay*) a few days after his address before Agrippa. He reached Malta in November, before the 15th.

Place in the History. — Paul on his voyage to Rome.

DIARY OF THE VOYAGE.

	Ramsay A.D. 59.	Lewin A.D. 60.
Left Cæsarea	Aug. 17	Aug. 21
Sidon	Aug. 18	Aug. 22
Myra	Sept. 1	Sept. 4

In Ship of Adramyttium.

Left Myra	Sept 1 . .	Sept. 4.
Cnidus	Sept. 23. . .	Sept. 19.
Arr. Fair Havens, Crete	Sept. 25. . .	Sept. 26.
Fast day	Oct. 5. . .	Sept. 23.
Left Fair Havens . .	Between Oct. 5 and 10	Oct. 18.

In Ship of Alexandria, Egypt.

The Hurricane

Undergirding the ship.	October 19 to November 1
Lightening the ship.	
Paul's vision brings cheer to all.	
Nearing an unknown shore.	
Casting anchor. Night.	

The Shipwreck

On the coast of Malta. Early in November.

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: St. Paul's Voyage to Rome. A Type of the Voyage of Life.

I. Paul and his Two Friends on board the Ship, vs. 1, 2.
II. Fair Weather Voyage. Contrary Winds, vs. 2–12.
III. The Hurricane, vs. 13–20.
IV. St. Paul brings a Message of Hope and Cheer from God, vs. 20–26.
V. The Shipwreck. Paul comes to the Front, vs. 27–37.
VI. The Voyage of Life.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Lucian, a brilliant Greek satirist, born about A.D. 120, in his *Dialogues*, "The ship," describes the voyage of a grain ship from Egypt to Myra, with a terrible storm, driving it to Greece, giving a good account of circumstances similar to St. Paul's.

Josephus writes the story of his own shipwreck on a voyage to Rome in A.D. 62, two or three years later than this voyage of St. Paul. Longfellow's *Building of the Ship:* "Thou too sail on, O Ship of State." Joseph Conrad's *The Typhoon* is said by Professor Phelps of Yale to be the greatest sea-story ever written.

LESSON IN ART.

Cole's *Voyage of Life*, in four pictures.

I. **PAUL AND HIS TWO FRIENDS ON BOARD THE SHIP**, vs. 1, 2. "Paul's life was full of adventure. His list in 2 Cor. 11 : 23 ff. is a remarkable one, but it is far from complete, for Paul subsequently encountered many a peril by sea and land. His best-known adventures, his experience with the mob in the temple, his rescue by the Romans, his removal to Cæsarea, his great voyage, and his shipwreck belong to his later career. It is perhaps as the greatest and most significant of his adventures, or at least of those in which Luke shared, that Luke relates in such detail the voyage to Italy." — *Prof. E. J. Goodspeed* in *Biblical World.*

The Ship. In Lucian's (A.D. 120–200) dialogue *The Ship* "we have perhaps the best account of an ancient ship, certainly of an Alexandrian grain ship, which has come down to us from antiquity." He describes for us such a ship of Adramyttium as Paul sailed in, which had arrived at Cæsarea from Egypt probably with a cargo of grain, and was on her way home to Adramyttium, a port on the Ægean Sea not far from Troas.

Lucian's ship was in the harbor near Athens, and thither his characters go to inspect it.

"*Samippus.* I say, though, what a size that ship was! 180 feet long, the man said, and something over a quarter of that in width ; and from deck to keel, the maximum depth, through the hold, 44 feet. And then the height of the mast with its huge yard ; and what a forestay it takes to hold it! And the lofty stern with its gradual curve, and its gilded beak, balanced at the other end by the long rising sweep of the prow, and the figures of her name-goddess, Isis, on either side. As to the other ornamental details, the paintings and the scarlet topsail, I was more struck by the anchors, and the capstans and windlasses, and the stern cabins. The crew was like a small army. And they were saying she carried as much corn as would feed every soul in

Attica for a year. And all depends for its safety on one little old atomy of a man, who controls that great rudder with a mere broomstick of a tiller! He was pointed out to me; Heron was his name, I think; a woolly-pated fellow, half-bald.

"*Timolaus.* He is a wonderful hand at it, so the crew say; a very Proteus in sea-cunning. Did they tell you how he brought them here, and all their adventures? how they were saved by a star?

"*Lycinus.* No, you can tell us about that now."

Roman Galley Ships

with oars, showing the square sail in use at that time. The vessel was steered, not by a rudder, but by two broad oars, one on each side of the stern.

The Rig "consisted of one, or more than one, large square sail, and nothing is more favorable than this for a run before the wind. Several specimens of rapid voyages could be given from classical antiquity. One of the most animated is that furnished by Cato, when he held up a fresh fig in the senate to impress on his countrymen the imminent nearness of their enemy, and said, 'This fruit was gathered fresh at Carthage three days ago.'" — *Schaff.*

The Greeks and Romans were ignorant of the compass. They had no hinged rudder at the stern, but steered by means of two oars, one on each quarter. Flags floated from the top of the mast, as in modern vessels. One to three or four small boats were drawn behind the ship.

Passengers. Paul a prisoner, Luke his physician, as we know from his use of "we," Aristarchus his tried friend from Thessalonica, a number of prisoners, Captain Julius of the Augustus' band for a guard, sailors, and a number of other passengers, we do not know how many. The 276 of verse 37 were on the next ship. Josephus states that the ship in which he was wrecked had 600 persons on board (*Life*, 3).

St. Paul was a man of distinction, a Roman citizen, not a penniless wanderer; "he had considerable command of money at this time, as shown by the fact that a long imprisonment and lawsuit were expensive. He had his own hired house in Rome. Luke was looked upon as his physician, and Aristarchus possibly as a servant on account of his attentions to Paul's comfort." Ramsay argues that in these last years he had received his hereditary property. On this voyage he was treated with distinguished courtesy, and special honors, as a Roman citizen of rank and learning and force of character.

II. **FAIR WEATHER VOYAGING WITH CONTRARY WINDS**, vs. 2–12. *Aug.* 17. *Cæsarea.* Into such a ship Paul and his company embarked as it was about to sail along the southern coast of Asia Minor, and then to turn northward up the Ægean Sea along the coast of the province of Asia of which Ephesus was the capital. Adramyttium, for which place the vessel was bound, was about 90 miles to the North.

Aug. 18, *to Sidon*, 67 miles north of Cæsarea on the coast of Palestine, which was reached in one day. Here Paul received liberty to go ashore and visit his Christian friends, and refresh himself.

Sept. 1 they reached *Myra* in the province of Lycia in Asia Minor. This required 14 days because instead of going directly northwest to Myra, about 400 miles, they took the northerly route east of Cyprus to avoid the northwesterly winds which blew directly in their face if they took the straight course to Myra. This made the voyage about 600 miles from Sidon, as they skirted along the southern shore of Asia Minor.

Here, instead of going on up the Ægean sea route, one often used in going to Rome but which required much land travel, the centurion found a grain ship from Alexandria ready to sail for Italy, and put therein his prisoners and their guard.

Sept. 1 the prisoners left Myra. The direct route toward Italy was westward, but the wind was contrary, and progress was slow. *Sept.* 23. When they came opposite

13. And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained *their* purpose, loosing *thence*, they sailed close by Crete.

14. But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.

to Cnidus, the S. W. point of Asia Minor, 130 miles from Myra, the wind blew from the northwest down the Ægean so fiercely that they could not continue on the direct course toward Italy, and hence turned southward toward the eastern end of Crete over against Cape Salmone, and coasted along its southern shores, defended by this mountainous island from the severity of the wind, till — *Sept.* 25 — they entered the harbor of Fair Havens near the middle of the south shore of Crete.

Oct. 5. *The Fast*, the Great Day of Atonement. The Jews often reckoned time by the Great Feast days, as we often do as to Christmas, and Easter, and the Episcopalians as to several other special days in their calendar.

Sept. 25 *to Oct.* 5 *or* 10. The ship remained at Fair Havens. The question what it was best to do under the circumstances was discussed between the centurion, Julius, the captain, the owner, and Paul. How far Paul spoke from prophetic enlightenment, and how far from experience and observation we do not know. But he "advised that they should lay up for the winter, as the middle of October was now on them. Julius had from the outset treated Paul with great courtesy, because the latter was a person of distinction, not a criminal; and hence the rather strange situation that a prisoner should be offering advice about the conduct of a Roman officer and the management of the ship. Naturally and reasonably, the officer preferred to be guided by the captain and the sailing-master, and go further west to the harbor called Phœnix. It was now accepted by all that it was too late to tempt the open sea, and that the winter must be spent in a Cretan port; but Phœnix was the one preferred in such cases (as we know from an inscription recording the detention there of another vessel of the same class), and the navigating authorities thought that they could reach it safely." — *Ramsay.*

From a photograph by Bonfils.

Sidon from the Sea.

Oct. 10, or thereabout, they sailed from Fair Havens, hoping to reach the safer harbor of Phenĭ'cē (Am. R., "Phœnix") at the west end of the island.

III. **THE HURRICANE**, vs. 13–20. Taking advantage, one day, of a gentle south wind, they sailed from Fair Havens; close to the west lay a prominent cape which they had to pass; and it was not quite certain that they could round it with the wind from the south. It was an anxious voyage at that late season; and there was the danger that the south wind might cast them on shore. Luke says (v. 13) that they **sailed close by Crete** (Am. R., "along Crete, close in shore"): the record of such a detail reflects the anxiety felt at this moment by one who knew what Paul's advice had been. They passed the cape, and then they had to run to Phœnix, across a great bay, where they were much further from shore. — *Ramsay.*

14. **There arose against it**, the ship, or as Am. R., "There beat down from it." Crete or the Ægean sea. **Wind called Euroclydon.** From *eurus*, east, and *Clydon*, a wave, "an east wind raising great waves." Am. R., "Euraquilo" = Eurus the East wind, and Aquilo the north wind, hence a northeasterly wind, a hurricane, cyclone, a modern Levanter.

Vs. 15, 16. "Then the southerly breeze suddenly changed to a north-northeast gale — a change which is frequent on that coast. So strong was the wind that the ship could not keep her course, but had to run before it, thus getting dangerously far out to sea in this stormy season. A modern sailing ship prefers the open sea; but ancient vessels were not so strongly built, and were fitted with one mast and one huge

15. And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let *her* drive.

16. And running under a certain island which is called Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat:

17. Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.

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sail, which strained the hull so severely as often to cause leaks and foundering." — *Ramsay.* **Could not bear up into the wind**, Am. R., "face the wind," look the wind in the eye.

Dangers and Efforts for Safety, vs. 16–19. "After a fearful run of twenty-three miles they neared the little island of Clauda (Cauda) and ran in under its lee." — *Farrar.* Here in calmer waters they were able for a short time to attend to several duties on which their future safety might depend.

First. "The little boat which in calm weather was towed behind the stern, was now hauled on board with difficulty."

Second. 17. **They used helps**, ropes, chains, and other apparatus for the purpose. "An ancient ship with one huge sail was exposed to extreme danger from such a blast; the straining of the great sail on the single mast was more than the hull could bear; and the ship was exposed to a risk which modern vessels do not fear, of foundering in the open sea." — *Ramsay.* **Undergirding the ship.** By ropes or chains passing around the vessel, on account of the strain of the mast with its great sail. The vessel was probably springing a leak.

We have probably an allusion to this practice in the lines of Horace (*Od. I. 14*):

"And scarcely can our keels keep sound,
Without the ropes that gird them round,
Against imperious wave."

Third. Their greatest danger was **lest they should fall into the quicksands** (Am. R., "be cast upon the Syrtis"). The Syrtis Major, on the coast of Africa. They were a long distance away, but the wind was blowing them directly towards those dangerous shoals and quicksands.

On the coast of Africa, the present gulf of Sidra in Tripoli, there were two Syrtes, one in the gulf, called Syrtis Major, *i.e.* "the Greater," and the other, Syrtis Minor, adjoining it on the west.

"The Greater Syrtis was proverbially dangerous from its sand banks and quicksands, and its unbroken exposure to the north winds; the Less from its shelving, rocky shores, its exposure to the northeast winds, and the consequent variableness of the tides in it." — *Harper's Classical Dictionary.*

"Quenched in a boggy *Syrtis*, neither sea nor good dry land." — *Milton.* "Here Vergil placed the shipwreck of Æneas." These quicksands were the terror of all Mediterranean sailors.

Fourth. **They strake sail**, Am. R., "lowered the gear." "Gear" means appurtenances of every kind, such as spars, sails, rigging. "Every ship situated as this one was, when preparing for a storm, sends down upon deck the 'top-hamper,' or gear connected with the fair-weather sails, such as the topsails." The gear lowered was probably that connected with the fair-weather sails. The yard with the sails attached to it was lowered, at least so far as to reef it into a storm sail. For sail of some kind they must have, or they would drift into the dreaded quicksands, or have foundered before they reached them. "They rounded the prow of the vessel on the starboard tack as near the wind as possible, and having made all as snug as possible, let her drift on broadside to leeward at the mercy of wind and wave. And so ended the miserable day, which had begun with such soft breezes and presumptuous hopes." — *Farrar.*

By heading the ship toward the N.W. with the wind blowing from the N.E. upon the sides of the ship, the tendency of the drift would be nearly westward, the pressure toward Africa by the N.E. gale, being balanced by the N.W. slant and pointed brow of the ship.

Fifth. 18. "And as we labored exceedingly with the storm" (Am. R.), **the next day they**, the sailors, **lightened the ship** (Am. R., "began to throw the freight overboard"). The imperfect denotes that they began to lighten the ship, set about it by

18. And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next *day* they lightened the ship;

19. And the third *day* we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

20. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on *us*, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

21. But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

22. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of *any man's* life among you, but of the ship.

23. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

24. Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

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throwing out some of the cargo, probably that which was on deck, or most easily accessible, not the precious wheat which was thrown overboard later (v. 38).

Sixth. **And the third day we** (Am. R., "they") **cast out with our** (Am. R., "their") **own hands. The tackling of the ship.** Farrar says, "This in a modern vessel would have been to cut down the masts; in ancient vessels, of which the masts were of less towering height, it consisted in heaving overboard the huge mainyard (see Smith) which was an act requiring the assistance of all the active hands. It fell over with a great splash, and the ship was indefinitely lightened."

IV. **ONE MORNING PAUL BRINGS TO THEM A MESSAGE OF CHEER AND HOPE FROM THE GOD HE SERVED**, vs. 20–26. *Hopeless Despair.* **20. When neither sun nor stars . . . appeared** (Am. R., "shone upon us"). We have to remember that before the invention of the compass the sun and stars were the only guides of sailors who were out of sight of land. **All hope . . . was then**, at last, after **many days**, nearly two weeks, **taken away**. "The imperfect marks the gradual spread of a spirit of listless despondency during the latter portion of this prolonged struggle for life." — *Rendall.* This long continued strain was intensely wearing on the nerves, so that they lost their appetite for food. Fasting increased the depression.

Illustration. In the early dawn of Britain, Cuthbert, the missionary bishop, left his sheep and went to preaching Christ. One day, with three companions on the sea, he was tossed by a storm upon a dreary shore, and his comrades cried to him: —

> "Cuthbert, let us perish, — hope is o'er.
> The furious tempest shuts the water path;
> The snow-storm binds us on the bitter land."

"Now, wherefore, friends, have ye so little faith?" God's servant said, and, stretching forth his hand toward heaven,

> "He lifted up his reverent eyes and spake, —
> 'I thank thee, Lord, the way is open there.
> No storm above our heads in wrath shall break
> And shut the heavenward path of love and prayer.'"

Paul brings a message of cheer, one morning in the midst of this despair, "when they had been long without food" (Am. R.). He was the only man in the ship who could do it. From this time on he was recognized as a leader of wisdom and power.

That morning Paul stood in the presence of passengers and sailors, and began his message by stating that they had come into this disaster by neglecting his advice two weeks before at Fair Havens in Crete. "Ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have set sail from Crete, and have gotten this injury and loss" (Am. R.). He referred to this in order to inspire confidence in the message he was about to give, — that **there shall be no loss of any man's life among you**, but the ship will be lost. He could promise this because in the night "an angel of the God whose I am, and whom I serve" (Am. R.) came to him and assured him that the promise God had made to him two years before (23 : 11) would certainly be fulfilled that he should **bear witness also at Rome.** His life therefore must be preserved, **and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.**

25. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

26. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

It is implied that Paul had given himself to prayer. It looked as if the promise of God would fail. Paul pleaded with God in faith. He prayed for the others whose lives were in danger, and their lives were granted in answer to his prayers. The good man is never selfish even in his prayers. He ever thinks of others.

" Observe how one godly man saves many ungodly men. Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom (Gen. 18 : 22–33). This is a singular pledge of God's love toward us, that he maketh certain drops of his goodness distil from us unto others." — *Calvin.*

Paul bade them to **be of good cheer,** and he aided their faith by showing them how they would be saved, by being **cast upon a certain island.**

Comfort, in Order to Comfort Others. God's vision came to Paul, but Paul used it to comfort and cheer the whole ship's company.

" Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God " (2 Cor. 1 : 4).

A Modern Experience in a Wreck. Mr. Dwight L. Moody, and Maj. Gen. O. O. Howard were among the most devoted and useful servants of God I have personally known. They had an experience that reminds me of the above experience of Paul. They with many others were passengers on the steamer *Spree*, in the autumn of 1892, when the great shaft broke, and the whole company were in momentary danger of sinking. There was a great prayer-meeting on board, led by Mr. Moody, and while they were praying, help came. General Howard thus speaks of the relation of prayer to their rescue: —

" Did the people of the *Spree* receive help miraculously from the heavenly Father? In these things, that is, in extreme dangers, it has been my good fortune to have had abundant experience. But I cannot tell where the natural and ordinary helps of Providence end or where the supernatural begins. The finite will never be allowed to know this dividing line. I only know this, at this time, on this ship, as at other times in my life, the demonstration is as clear as daylight that the Lord is a hearer and is an answerer of the prayers of his children. He evidently loves to arrange his blessings as he does our daily bread, so as to make them come as much as possible through common-sense ways and human instrumentality. There was one blessing on the wrecked steamer that was beyond human procuring. It was the almost universal lifting up of human souls unto the very sunlight of God's presence."

" It is an interesting confession that Mr. Moody makes, that when the *Spree*, on which he made his passage home, was thought to be sinking, ' it was the darkest hour of his life.' ' My thoughts,' he says, ' went out to my loved ones at home — my wife and children, anxiously awaiting my coming — my friends on both sides of the sea — the schools and all the interests so dear to me — and realized that perhaps the next hour would separate me forever from all these, so far as the world was concerned : I confess it almost broke me down. . . . I could not endure it. I must have relief, and relief came in prayer.' A good deal of unreal talk is indulged in about the Christian taking no heed of death, and welcoming it under any form in which it may come. If a man did get into such a state, he would simply have attained to a state of supreme selfishness." Mr. Moody did a great deal to cheer the passengers, both by his words and actions.

V. **THE SHIPWRECK. PAUL STANDS FORTH AS A LEADER IN SAVING THE PEOPLE,** vs. 27–37. On the fourteenth night since the storm began, there was a change. **Adria** in this verse was not limited to the present Adriatic sea, but was " the name given to the central basin of the Mediterranean Sea." The sailors thought that they heard signs of approach to some land, from the sound of breakers, and also from the white lines of foam seen through the darkness. They immediately dropped the lead and found that the water was 20 fathoms, 120 feet, deep. Soon it was 15 fathoms ; and they knew for a certainty that they were nearing land, and were in danger of having their ship driven irresistibly on some rocky shore. " In the face of this fresh peril the only thing to be done was to cast anchor. So they dropped four anchors through the hawse-holes in which the two great paddle rudders ordinarily moved "; **and wished for the day.**

30. Some of the sailors planned to launch the boat which had been brought on board, and by it escape to the shore, leaving the passengers to their fate.

31. Paul, being a practical man as well as a missionary, saw through their plot, and immediately went to the centurion to whom he had access and told him about it. He could not appeal to the officers of the ship, for they were in the plot. On the other hand, the soldiers had the weapons and could enforce obedience. Paul, having promised safety, said to him "**Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.**" He says "ye," not "we." He appealed to their instinct of self-preservation. There was reason in these words. The sailors understood managing the ship; the soldiers could have done nothing. Accordingly the soldiers cut the ropes and the one boat they had drifted away.

Paul brings strength and comfort. When after the long dreary night, the day began to dawn, Paul again came forward and urged the people to take a good square meal, which they had not done for days, because this was necessary to give them strength to reach the shore. They could do this restfully on account of his assurance that every one would safely reach the land. Then Paul set them an example. He first gave thanks to the true God as the giver of every good and perfect gift, the gift of deliverance as well as of food.

"The finest touch in this graphic narrative, whose accuracy has been proved more than once, is the portraiture of Paul and of his growing influence over these inflexible and rude minds. It fits the whole story of Acts." — *S. S. Times.*

VI. **THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.** The story of Paul's voyage from Cæsarea to Rome is an excellent illustration of our lives as compared to a voyage.

1. Cole's series of four pictures on "The Voyage of Life" are very interesting and suggestive. They represent the four periods of human life, Childhood, Youth, Manhood, and Old Age. In each picture there is a guardian angel. Selections from the verses printed under each will give hints of their symbolic meaning.

1. Childhood.

"Who shall preserve thee, beautiful child?
Keep thee as thou art now,
Bring thee a spirit undefiled
At God's pure throne to bow?"

2. Youth.

"The golden palace of my God
Towering above the clouds I see,
Beyond the Cherub's bright abode,
Higher than angels' thoughts can be."

3. Manhood.

"When by the dreadful tempest borne
High on the broken wave,
We know Thou art not slow to hear
Nor impotent to save."

4. Old Age.

"A beam from heaven is sent to cheer
The Christian on his road,
And angels are attending near
To bear him home to God."

The Sea of Life.

"'Tis not in man
To look unmoved upon that heaving waste which, from horizon to horizon spread,
Meets the o'erarching heavens on every side, blending their hues in distant faintness there.
'Tis wonderful! And yet, my boy, just such is life. Life is a sea as fathomless,
As wide, as terrible, and yet sometimes as calm and beautiful. The light of heaven
Smiles on it, and 'tis decked with every hue of glory and of joy. Anon dark clouds
Arise, contending winds of fate go forth, and Hope sits weeping o'er a general wreck.
And thou must sail upon this sea a long, eventful voyage. The wise *may* suffer wreck,
The foolish *must*. Oh, then, be early wise! Learn from the mariner his skilful art —
To ride upon the waves and catch the breeze and dare the threatening storm and trace a path,
'Mid countless dangers, to the destined port, unerringly secure. Oh, learn from him
To station quick-eyed Prudence at the helm, to guard thy sail from Passion's sudden blasts,
And make Religion thy magnetic guide, which, though it trembles as it lowly lies,
Points to the light that changes not, — in heaven." — *Anon.*

2. *The Port to Which We Should Sail.* A statesman declares that "The first requisite of one who would have a successful life, as of the pilot of a ship, is a knowledge of its goal. No helmsman however skilled in handling a wheel or experienced in seamanship would be trusted to guide a vessel unless he knew and could specify in which direction it should go. A knowledge of the goal of nations is the first essential of statesmanship," and also of manhood and womanhood.

There is but one true port for which we should steer, the kingdom of heaven on earth, in ourselves and in all the world. It is the celestial city, a perfect character like that of Jesus Christ begun on earth and completed in the immortal life, the whole world transformed into the city of God.

"O young mariner,
Down to the haven
Call your companions.
Launch your vessel,
Acrowd your canvas,
And ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the gleam."
— *Tennyson.*

Let each scholar say plainly to himself, what is the port for which he is sailing.

3. *The Cargo.* Every ship has a cargo. A cargo of hopes, of possibilities, of mind, of soul, of talents, of all the good things God has bestowed.

A cargo of habits, principles, deeds, possessions.

A cargo of beliefs and opinions ; some valuable, some as deadly as nitro-glycerine. "I have my opinions," said a young man to his pastor once. "Yes," said the pastor, "and they will wreck you before you reach the port of safety."

4. *The Captain* should be the Lord Jesus guiding our vessel by his teachings and his life. He knows the way. He knows every rock and shoal, every current and storm. He is the pilot who never has lost a vessel committed to his care.

Much depends on the captain and pilot. If we let self-will, or pleasure, or ignorance, or Satan rule, we shall soon be wrecked, or reach the wrong port. Only Jesus is wise enough and strong enough to pilot us safely to our haven of heaven.

Let each scholar say from his heart :

Jesus, Saviour, pilot me over Life's tempestuous sea.

5. *Compass and Chart* God has given us in the Scriptures and in the life of Jesus, and the saints of old. We need to study them daily and make them familiar, ready to guide us in every emergency.

6. *Peaceful Seas.* Most of the voyage will probably be in peaceful waters, and pleasant though not cloudless skies, giving intimations and visions of immortal and spiritual life. On earth we are to learn the songs and music of heaven, the "peace which passeth understanding," the "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

(Continued in the next Lesson.)

LESSON VI. — November 5.

SHIPWRECKED ON MELITA (MALTA). — Acts 27 : 38–28 : 10.

PRINT vs. 38–44. COMMIT vs. 42–44.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Jehovah redeemeth the soul of his servants ; And none of them that take refuge in him shall be condemned.* — Ps. 34 : 22.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

REPORTING A SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

A writer in the *Sunday School Times*, several years ago, gave her experience in interesting her class, by means of brief reports at the close of the lesson. I watched the well-known Dr. Forbush as he used the same plan in his large class of young men.

"When I had to report those lectures," she said, "I suddenly found them very interesting.

"My class was decidedly uninterested. Here was an idea. Did reporting make one interested? Then my lively boys should report the Sunday-school lessons. Give a boy something to do and he likes it.

"There were two packages with my Bible the next Sunday. A package excites curiosity.

"'Boys,' was the first remark, 'you must pay extra attention to the lesson to-day, for each one is to spend the last five minutes reporting it.'

"Then the two packages were opened, and dainty little note-books came out of one, and well-sharpened pencils with rubber ends came from the other.

"'We will study the lesson the usual way,' I said, 'till the bell rings for the last five minutes. Then each of you will report the lesson. It may be just the title, or it may be more, just as you prefer, but you will have to pay good attention.'

"It was a great help both to the boys in remembering, and to the teacher in her method of teaching. Reporting thus from memory has many advantages."

LEARN BY HEART.

Mark 16 : 18 ; Acts 28 : 2.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — November, A.D. 59. Paul was at Malta 3 months, from the last of Nov. to the last of Feb.

Place. — A bay on the north shore of Malta, still called St. Paul's Bay.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Note the many times and ways in which Paul brought help to others.
The place where the wrecked people reached the shore.
Why are the people called "barbarous"?
The kindness of these people.
Paul gathering wood for the fire.
What do we learn from the viper episode?
In what ways did Paul illustrate the Gospel he preached?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: St. Paul's Work in Malta.

I. ALL SAFE ASHORE ON THE ISLAND OF MALTA, vs. 38–44.
II. THE VOYAGE OF LIFE (Continued).
III. KINDLY RECEPTION BY THE ISLANDERS, 28:1, 2.
IV. PAUL AS A MEMBER OF THE HEAVENLY FOOT SOCIETY, v. 3.
V. PAUL AND THE VIPER, vs. 3–6.
VI. PAUL THREE MONTHS AT WORK IN MALTA, vs. 7–10.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Rackham's *Commentary* here is brief, but very good.

Mr. James Smith of Jordanhills, in his *Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul*, has minutely investigated ancient ships, the winds, the scenery of Malta, and illustrated the whole with beautiful plates and carefully drawn maps.

The Expositor's Bible.

Sir Wm. Ramsay's *St. Paul the Traveller.*

On vipers, see *The Reptile Book*, by Raymond L. Ditmars, of New York Zoölogical park.

The Apostles as Everyday Men, by Prest. Robert Ellis Thompson, S. T. D.

W. C. Gannett's *Blessed be Drudgery.*

38. And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

39. And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

40. And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed *themselves* unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

41. And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground: and the fore part stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

I. **ALL SAFE ASHORE ON THE ISLAND OF MALTA**, vs. 38–44. The day was now dawning. **They lightened the ship**, for the third time. The object was to enable them to approach nearer the shore, for safety. **The wheat.** The main cargo was retained as long as possible.

39. They knew not the land. The Alexandrian sailors were familiar with Malta, but not with this part of it which was out of their regular course. Moreover they were close in shore, and the rain prevented any wide views. **Discovered a certain creek** (rather, inlet) **with a shore**, Am. R., "perceived a certain bay with a beach." A sandy beach, upon which they could run the ship, and hold there without going to pieces before they could land. It would be almost impossible for any to escape if they ran upon rocks in a heavy storm. **They were minded . . . to thrust in the ship**, more correctly as in Am. R., "They took counsel whether they could drive the ship upon it," the beach.

40. And when they had taken up the anchors, not "taken up," but the reverse. The sailors loosed the cables of the anchors which were fastened within the ship, that they might fall off into the sea. "They cut the cables" and **committed** not **themselves** but the anchors, *i.e.* "left the anchors in the sea." (Am. R., "And casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea, at the same time loosing the bands of the rudders"). **The rudder bands.** "Ancient ships were steered by two large paddles, one on each quarter. These had been secured by lashings, when drifting, or at the time of anchoring. These lashings were now cut so that the paddles could be used for steering. **Mainsail.** Rather (Am. R.) "foresail," the only one that could be well used under the circumstances.

41. And falling into, Am. R., "lighting upon," **a place where two seas met.** The ship was coming from the right of the picture. The island of Salmonetta shelters the

42. And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape.

43. But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast *themselves* first *into the sea*, and get to land:

44. And the rest, some on boards, and some on *broken pieces* of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

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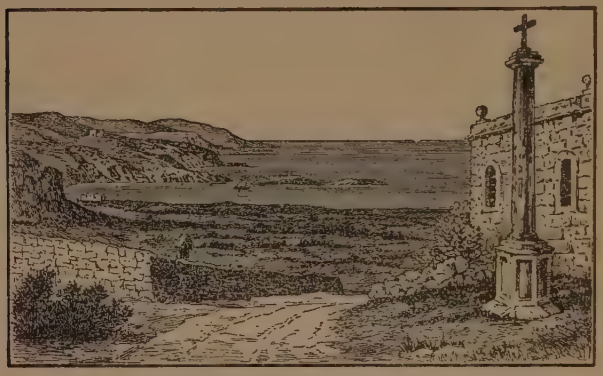
bay on the northwest. The wind was driving the ship through the bay from the N.E. along the main shore. When the ship had come near the place where the island is separated from the shore by a narrow inlet, they met the waters of the outside sea rushing through the inlet to meet the waters of the bay. Here the **two seas met**, "and in the stormy race where the waters of this current met the waters of the bay the vessel would not answer to the helm, and all they could do was to run her ashore." — *Farrar*. "The ship which probably drew 18 feet of water (3 fathoms) struck a bottom of mud, graduating into tenacious clay into which the forepart would fix itself and be held fast, while the stern was exposed to the force of the waves" (*Smith*) **and was broken with the violence of the waves.** Am. R., "began to break up."



St. Paul's Bay, Malta. From the South.

In the centre is the island of Salmonetta, with a lighthouse upon it. At the west end of the island, between it and the point off shore, is the place where the two seas met. The ship marks the spot where the wreck occurred. The rocky cape, Koura, where the sailors first heard the surf, lies further east beyond the building shown in the picture. (Lewin.)

42. "At this fatal moment St. Paul had the narrowest escape of all. He was on the point of losing his life not by the sea but by the sword, and the sword not of the lawful executioner, but of selfish murderers. Human selfishness made another attempt to frustrate the divine purpose. Before it was the *sailors;* now it is the *soldiers*. These were responsible for the *prisoners* with their lives; and as the latter had a good opportunity to make their escape, the simplest plan was to kill them at once. But Julius, however indifferent he might be to the fate of the rest, felt a real gratitude if not affection for the apostle, and forbade his men to carry out their proposal." — *Rackham*. Thus all the prisoners were saved; by floating ashore **on boards and . . . broken pieces of the ship.** Am. R., "planks and . . . other things from the ship," which the waves had scattered over the water, and the wind was driving toward the shore. They were, doubtless, aided by the swimmers. Some one has suggested that Paul who was enduring his fourth shipwreck, was one of the first to reach the land, and the most active in rescuing others.

II. **THE VOYAGE OF LIFE** (Continued from the last Lesson). 7. *Contrary Winds in Our Experiences of Life*. In every life there are contrary winds, opposing our progress, interfering with our hopes, fierce temptations urging us from our course of duty. Every mariner on the sea of life faces these contrary winds, even in childhood. Hard duties, heavy burdens, sickness and pain, trials to our strength, trials of our temper, disappointments, poverty, failures.

"The law of the soul is eternal endeavor,
That bears the man onward and upward forever."

It is this fact of the creative power of choice, that shows us how temptation, which always demands a choice between good and evil, is so necessary in building up character and character in its largest sense is the man.

"One ship drives East, another drives West,
While the selfsame breezes blow;
'Tis the set of the sails, and not the gales,
That bids them where to go.

"Like the winds of the air, are the wars of the fates,
As we journey along through life;
'Tis the set of the soul that decides the goal,
And not the storm or the strife."

8. *The Fiercer Storms* will sometimes come upon us like the Euroclydon. Dr. F. B. Myer spoke of this in an address at Northfield. "I have had some experience of life, with its sorrow and its fight, its toil and severity of demand. And I rejoice from my soul that on this hard battlefield there are opportunities of ministry which could only present themselves under the circumstances of pain, conflict and death. It is good to have had the fight; it is good to have seen what God can do; it is good to have been on the storm-swept ocean with the life-boat crew, and with all my soul, I congratulate you girls upon your chance of thus knowing God."

It would be effective to read to the class Joaquin Miller's famous poem on "Columbus," to stimulate, inspire, encourage them to go on bravely in spite of difficulties and opposition, toward their ideals, their plans, their hope of true lives here, of helpful reforms, and of eternal life hereafter. In our country we see what Columbus gained by *Sailing On.*

"Behind him lay the gray Azores,
Behind the gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores,
Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said: 'Now must we pray,
For lo! the very stars are gone,
Brave admiral, speak, what shall I say?'
'Why, say, "Sail on! sail on! and on!"'

"'My men grow mutinous day by day;
My men grow ghastly wan and weak.'
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.
'What shall I say, brave admiral, say,
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?'
'Why, you shall say at break of dawn,
"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"'

"They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:
'This mad sea shows his teeth to-night.
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,
With lifted teeth, as if to bite!
Brave admiral, say but one good word;
What shall we do when hope is gone?'
The words leapt like a leaping sword:
'Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!'

"Then, pale and worn, he kept his deck
And peered through darkness. Ah, that night
Of all dark nights! And then a speck —
A light! A light! A light! A light!
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!
It grew to be Time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world; he gave that world
Its grandest lesson: 'On! sail on!'"

9. *Lightening the Ship.* Sometimes it is necessary to lighten the ship; for our wealth, our cares, our treasures may become burdens, and sink us, as men in the wreck of the *Central America* tied their belts of gold around them, and sank instead of floating till help could come.

"The ship is safe in the water, so long as the water is not in the ship. The Christian is safe in the world so long as the world is not in the Christian."

10. *The Wreck.*

"For sadder sight than eye can know,
Than proud bark lost, or seaman's woe,
Or battle fire, or tempest cloud,
Or preybird's shriek, or ocean shroud,
The shipwreck of a soul."

There is one sadder sight, — the wrecking of other souls. And let us learn from Paul's experience, and that of his shipmates, that even wrecked souls may be saved if they will take heed to his counsels, eat of heavenly bread, and turn to their God.

11. *Safe home in Port.*

"Thou too, sail on, O ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate.
We know what Master laid thy keel,
What workman wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge, and what a heat,
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope.

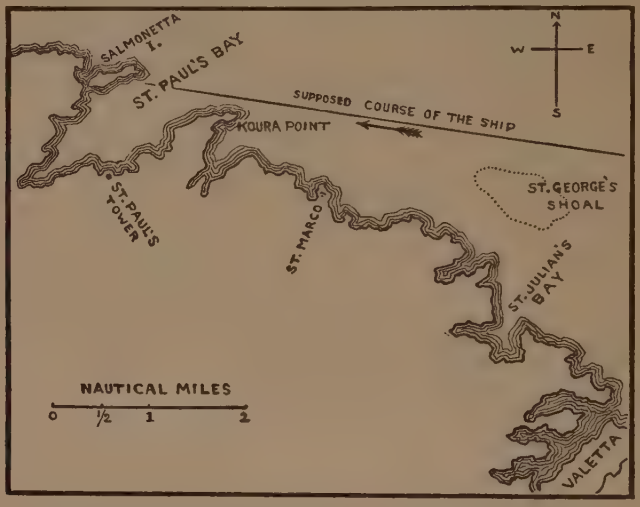
"Fear not each sudden sound and shock;
'Tis of the wave, and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale.
In spite of rock and tempest roar
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea:
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee — are all with thee."
— *Longfellow.*

Blessed are those who with Christ as their captain and the Bible as their chart, reach safely our heavenly home, and our Father's welcome; and can sing Rev. W. F. Warren's hymn:

"Into the harbor of heaven now we glide,
We're home at last;
Softly we drift on its bright silver tide,
We're home at last.

"Glory to God! all our dangers are o'er,
We stand secure on the glorified shore;
Glory to God! we will shout evermore,
We're home at last."

III. KINDLY RECEPTION BY THE INHABITANTS OF THE ISLAND, 28 : 1, 2. They soon learned that the island was called Melita, of which "Malta" is a shortened form. This is a small island 60 miles south of Sicily, and about 200 miles from the African coast. It is 17 miles in length, 9 miles in its greatest breadth, and



Part of the Island of Malta, the Course of the Vessel, Point of Anchorage, and Place of Beaching.

60 miles in circumference, with an area of 95 sq. miles. The inhabitants were of Phœnician origin, from Carthage in Africa. The island was governed then by the Romans. Now it has been under British rule since 1800.

2. And the barbarous people. "The term barbarians is characteristic of the nationality of the writer. It does not indicate rudeness or uncivilized habits, but merely non-Greek birth." — *Ramsay.* To the Greeks and the Romans, all other nationalities were "barbarians," that is, foreigners, whatever their civilization. **Shewed us no little kindness.** "'No *common* kindness' would be a more correct translation (unusual unexpected kindness). The Greek word, too, for 'kindness' (almost exactly our word *philanthropy*), is worthy of remark. It denotes the kindness that is shown on the general ground of humanity, irrespective of differences of rank or race." — *Schaff.* **They kindled a fire.** "An objection has been made that there is now a great absence of wood in the island. But within a very few years there was wood close to St. Paul's Bay." — *Conybeare.* **Because of the cold.** The rain still continued. It was late in the autumn, and a northeast rain is very chilly, even when the thermometer is not very low. They received us every one, prisoners, sailors and all, like brothers. These people were "not forgetful to entertain strangers"; and thereby "they entertained angels unawares," as Paul and Luke proved themselves to be (Heb. 13 : 2).

Illustration. "There is a story of a king who had a boy of whom he was very fond. He gave him beautiful rooms to live in, and pictures and toys and books. He gave him a pony and a boat and servants. He furnished teachers to instruct him in all that would make him good and great. But for all this the young prince was not happy. He wore a frown wherever he went, and was always wishing for something he did not have. One day a magician came to court and said to the king, 'I can make your boy happy, but you must pay me a great price for telling you the secret.' The price was paid. The magician took the boy into a private room, and wrote something with a white substance on a piece of paper. Then he gave the boy a lighted candle, and told him to hold it under the paper and read what was written. He read these words,

'Do a kindness to some one every day.' The story is that the prince did as directed and became the happiest boy in the kingdom." — *Rev. W. C. Gordon, Ph.D.*

IV. **PAUL AS A MEMBER OF THE HEAVENLY FOOT SOCIETY**, v. 3. As Paul himself quotes in his Epistle to the Romans (10 : 15), "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things." It is a good thing to be a member of this society, with its branches in the home, and in the Sunday School.

The fire would need continual replenishing ; wood and faggots were scarce, and might require going some distance. "But Paul's energy was again conspicuous ; in spite of the exhaustion of getting to the shore, he set about collecting fuel with such zeal as to attract the notice of the Maltese." — *Rackham.* Paul, though the greatest man then living, was ready to do the humblest duty. He knew the greatness of serving. His Master had taught this duty and privilege when he washed his disciples' feet. "Whatever was to be done, if he were able to take a part in it, he was never wanting, whether it was in counseling about a difficulty, in comforting under danger, or helping by bodily labor to relieve the general distress." — *Cambridge Bible.* Thus Paul held up the banner of the cross, and proved the Christian spirit.

The Miracle of San Diego, or *The Angels in the Kitchen*, Murillo's picture in the Louvre, illustrates the worthiness of doing the humblest duties that help others. William C. Gannett thus describes this picture which many of us have seen and admired. Murillo "shows us the interior of a convent kitchen ; but doing the work there are not mortals in old dresses, but beautiful, white-winged angels. One serenely puts the kettle on the fire to boil, and one is lifting up a pail of water with heavenly grace, and one is at the kitchen dresser reaching up for plates ; and I believe there is a little cherub running about and getting in the way, trying to help. . . . All are so busy, and working with such a will, and so refining the work as they do it, that somehow you forget that pans are pans, and pots are pots, and only think of the angels, and how very natural and beautiful kitchen work is, — just what the angels would do, of course."

"O Lord, I pray
That for this day
I may not swerve
By foot or hand
From thy command
Not to be served, but to serve.

"This too I pray
That from this day
No love of ease
Nor pride prevent
My good intent
Not to be pleased, but to please.

"And if I may
I'd have this day
Strength from above
To set my heart
In heavenly art
Not to be loved, but to love."
— *Maltbie D. Babcock, D.D.*

"Dear Jesus, help me now I pray, —
To do all the good I can,
In all the ways I can,
To all the people I can,
And just as long as I can.
And this I ask for Thy Name's sake.
Amen."

Do the smallest duties with highest motives.
Turning the common dust of servile opportunity to gold.

V. **ST. PAUL AND THE VIPER**, vs. 3–6. "Paul had got together a large bundle of furze roots, and had just put it on the blazing fire, when **there came a viper**, which had been lying torpid, being suddenly revived and irritated by the heat, darting out of the bundle, **and fastened on his hand**." — *Farrar.* The viper was probably the common viper of Europe, *pelias berus.* It is poisonous, but not deadly in England, but deadly in warmer climates. But it may have been the *viperina aspis*, or the asp, about twelve to eighteen inches long, such as caused the death of Cleopatra. Certainly this serpent must have been deadly, or the people would not have expected to see him die.

"The viper, a venomous little reptile, in various forms, infests nearly the whole of Europe, but is absent from the New World. A bounty is offered in France for the destruction of vipers, and it is to obtain this bounty that a man named Courtol, in the south of France, has in seven years, in a single province, killed 9,175 vipers, as shown by the official records." — *Youth's Companion.*

There are now no venomous serpents in Malta, but that is no reason for believing there were none ages ago, when the island was sparsely inhabited. One writer on this verse says that no poisonous serpent ever fastens itself to what it strikes with its fangs. I went to a naturalist and he tells me that the writer is mistaken ; and he showed me *The Reptile Book* by Raymond Lee Ditmars, curator of reptiles in the New York City Zoölogical Park (1907), who says the viperine snakes "do not strike and

then await the death of the animal from poison, as is characteristic of most crotaline snakes in captivity, but once seizing the animal retain their hold with fangs deeply imbedded until its struggles have ceased."

4. **When the barbarians saw the venomous beast hanging from his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer.** So prominent a man would be pointed out as a prisoner ; and it may be that he was recognized by the chain on one hand. **Whom vengeance.** The God of Justice, Nemesis, the Avenger, suffereth not to live. Paul had escaped from the wreck, but he could not escape from the sword of divine justice.

From an ancient Ivory Diptych brought from Rome.

St. Paul shaking the Viper from his Hand into the Burning Sticks.

5. **And he shook off the beast into the fire.** With perfect composure, doubtless arising from the two promises, (1) that of Christ to his disciples concerning serpents (Mark 16 : 18 ; Luke 10 : 19), and (2) the promise that he should preach the gospel in Rome, and, therefore, he could not die before he reached that city. "A man is immortal till his work is done."

6. **They looked when,** "they expected that," **he should have swollen,** etc. This was "the usual effect of a viper's bite, making itself apparent in a very short time." "The writer," Mr. Eugene Stock, "once saw a viper 'fasten on' the wrist of a friend in Epping Forest. The whole arm rapidly swelled to an enormous size, and though life was saved, the sufferer was in imminent peril for some days, and an invalid for months." **They changed their minds, and said that he was a god,** because only divine power could have preserved him from harm. "Instead of being a murderer or a god, he is, as Bengel quaintly suggests, *a man of God*." At Lystra they first thought Paul was a god, and then stoned him for a malefactor (Acts 14 : 8–19). All these things were Paul's credentials, so that these people would be more likely to listen to his preaching of the gospel, and more ready to receive it.

VI. **THREE MONTHS IN MALTA,** vs. 7–10. For three winter months, till the last of February, all that were on the ship were compelled to remain in Malta. We may be sure that Paul and Luke were busy helping every one they could, illustrating by actions, and teaching by word the Gospel of Jesus. How many of the people could understand the Greek language, or the Latin, we do not know, but some of them did.

However, there were those in official circles who could be reached. One of the estates of **the chief man of the island,** Publius the governor, was in the neighborhood. The traditional place is Citta Vecchia, where is the country residence of the present British governor. Naturally he invited to his home Julius the Roman centurion and his staff, and this would lead to his entertaining Paul and Luke also, when he learned from Julius what they had done on the voyage, and since. The "us" shows that these were among those courteously entertained for three days.

The dangerous sickness of Publius' father opened the door of opportunity to Paul and Luke to illustrate and preach the gospel. There was need of the moral influence here that would come from miraculous healing by the preacher of the gospel. For Paul had no credentials that would be of use, and as a prisoner suspicion would be cast upon him. So that God himself gave him the best of credentials by bestowing on him miraculous power.

8. **And it came to pass** that at this time **the father of Publius lay sick of a fever.** The Greek is in the plural, which probably indicates the attacks of a recurrent or intermittent fever, occurring at intervals as in malaria. **And of a bloody flux,** Greek *dusenteria*, of which our word dysentery is a transliteration. The combination of the fevers with dysentery would, according to Hippocrates, who also uses the plural form, make the case more than usually critical. **To whom Paul entered in, and prayed in**

faith to the great Source of healing, and to show the people that all his power came from the same God whose gospel he preached.

And laid his hands on him, indicating that the healing came through Paul, **and healed him.**

9. **Others also.** The original is more extensive, " all the rest " **who had diseases in the island came and were healed.** Nothing is said of Paul's preaching, for that is taken for granted. Paul could not neglect such golden opportunities of preaching the gospel. His words and deeds went together. He followed closely in the footsteps of his Master.

10. **Honoured us with many honours.** They paid them every possible attention, trying to express their respect and gratitude. **Laded us with such things as were necessary,** as clothing, provisions ; not as pay, but out of kindness and love. We must remember (1) that they had lost everything by the wreck. (2) They all of them received their help as well as the apostles. (3) That such tokens of respect were peculiarly proper, and showed a right mind. (4) This was entirely different, in principle and effect, from receiving hire for their miraculous cures, which was forbidden by Christ (Matt. 10 : 8). (5) The good things which came to the soldiers and sailors through Paul would recommend the gospel to them.

" *Service* is one of the ways by which a tiny insect like one of us can get a purchase on the whole universe. If he finds a job where he can be of use, he is hitched to the star of the world, and moves with it." — *Dr. Richard C. Cabot.*

A Modern Church expresses thus its purpose and aim. " Our desire for this church is that it shall be a real power to help real need — the living exponent of the religion which Jesus taught and lived. We wish it to be a church through whose teaching and spirit it will be easier for a poor man to be honest, and less distressing for an honest man to be poor ; where Christ-like sympathy will succor the tempted, and comfort the troubled ; which will be a loving family, the strength and sincerity of whose Christian faith will help the doubting to believe, the sinning to repent, the wandering to return, and in whose pure and gentle love the love of Jesus will be reflected into all human hearts and lives.

" We would have this church a warm and welcoming sanctuary into which no struggling one can ever come without feeling the touch of a brother's hand, without being guided to that Saviour who can and who will save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him."

LESSON VII. — November 12.

WORLD'S TEMPERANCE LESSON. — Rom. 14:13–15:3.

COMMIT vs. 16, 17.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth.* — ROM. 14 : 21.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

BY THE STREET CALLED STRAIGHT WE COME TO THE HOUSE CALLED BEAUTIFUL. — *Old New England Saying.*

In all Life there is a direct and narrow way which leads to all that is best, noblest, happiest, most useful for this world and the world to come. To turn to the right or to the left from this road, is to go toward sin, and darkness, and ruin.

But there are often uncertainties as to just where " the street called Straight " runs. Therefore there is another saying :

IN THE STREET CALLED STRAIGHT THERE ARE LIGHTS TO SHOW THE WAY.

It is some of these Lights to show the way that we would bring to the notice of your class, to enable them to see clearly the straight road to Temperance, and to avoid the by-paths that turn off toward Ruin.

LEARN BY HEART.

Rom. 14 : 13, 15, 21 ; 15 : 1, 2.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Handbook of Modern Facts about Alcohol, by Cora Frances Stoddard. " A valuable, compact, attractive presentation of the results of the most careful studies of alcohol in its relation to child-life, mental and physical ability, skill, endurance, accidents, disease and general social welfare." Illustrated by 50 full page drawings and diagrams, many printed in colors. The only book of

the kind in the English language. (Paper $.50, Cloth $.75. 36 Bromfield St., Boston.)

Temperance Bible Studies, by F. N. Peloubet, full of temperance illustrations for the class. (Nat. Temperance Soc., 58 Reade St., N. Y.)

Elijah Tone, Citizen, a capital temperance story, by Amos R. Wells (Christian Endeavor Soc.).

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Two early church problems as to right and wrong:
(1) The two sabbath days.
(2) Eating meat offered to idols.
How Paul would settle them.
How far is our problem as to Intoxicating Liquors like those of the early Gentile Christians?
Is Paul's plan adapted to our day?
What should we do in all such cases of conscience?
Reasons for signing the Temperance Pledge.

I. **TWO PROBLEMS WHICH PUZZLED THE EARLY CHURCH.** *First Problem: The Jewish Christians and the Two Sabbaths;* see Col. 2 : 16. The Jewish sabbath was on our Saturday, and was kept very strenuously every seventh day. Jesus and his disciples kept that seventh day. But after the resurrection on the first day of the week, that day to Christians became the Lord's day and for them it gradually took the place of the Jewish sabbath. It was just as really a seventh day of the Fourth commandment as was the Jewish sabbath. For a time both days were kept by the Christians, or some kept Saturday and some Sunday, till gradually the Lord's day, Sunday, was adopted by all.

During this process of change there was necessarily a diversity of judgment as to what was right. Disciples in each party would condemn the others who differed from them. Particularly there would be no little friction between Jewish and Gentile Christians, and one party would think the other narrow, who in turn might condemn the other as wanting in piety.

Second: The Gentile Christians living in the midst of idolaters would naturally be puzzled sometimes as to what was right to do in their intercourse with their heathen neighbors. One of these puzzling questions was whether it was right to eat flesh that had been offered to idols. A large portion of the meat offered for sale in the markets had been offered in some heathen temple as a sacrifice to idols. Should they eat of such meat? Were they, in so doing, partakers in idol worship, or indifferent to it? Should they go to any heathen feasts with their friends, or should they abstain altogether? (See v. 14 and the whole of 1 Cor. 8.)

From an old print.

Ancient Sacrifice.

What to do in these perplexing circumstances, how to determine what was right and what was wrong, "is a problem that has perplexed not only every conscientious and even every timid person, but also every teacher of practical morals in every age and nation." — *Lyman Abbott.*

Paul's Solution of these Problems. NOTE 1. There are certain acts which are universally conceded to be right, and as coming within the Christian law of liberty. About these, people of fair common sense and religious intelligence have no question, and do them freely.

NOTE 2. There are other acts which are as plainly prohibited. To do them is wrong and always wrong. This lesson does not concern such questions as these.

NOTE 3. There is a very large number of acts which lie in the twilight region, between the day of certain right and the night of acknowledged wrong. They are not wrong in themselves, nor necessarily right, but what we should do depends on circumstances and conditions.

Let us therefore consider Paul's solution; and then later apply this solution to the great problem of Intemperance.

1. Where good and true men differ; where their action in the case of the two sabbaths, and of food offered to idols is done **unto the Lord**, sincerely, conscientiously, "it is not for us **to judge**," *i.e.* "to condemn," to "pronounce judgment," to "censure" (Thayer's Greek Lexicon) them. They have a right to their opinions, and to liberty of thought and action.

But (vs. 14, 22, 23) for himself, he must have a clear conscience, he must have

13. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock, or an occasion to fall, in *his* brother's way.

14. I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean.

15. But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died.

16. Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18. For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

20. For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed *are* pure; but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21. *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22. Hast thou faith? have *it* to thyself before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.

15: 1. We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2. Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

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faith, an assured belief that he is right, — otherwise he is condemned by God and by his own conscience, and is not a sincere Christian disciple.

2. Our attitude toward such questions should be the law of loving our neighbor as ourselves, — to do nothing that will injure others even though it seems right for ourselves.

Note how many times and in how many ways this is emphasized by Paul.

(1) v. 13. Let **no man put a stumblingblock, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way.**

(2) v. 15. **If thy brother be grieved with thy meat** (Am. R., " because of meat "), **now walkest thou not charitably** (Am. R., " walkest no longer in love "). **Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died.** If Christ died to save this man from yielding to sin, how much more should you deny yourself such a small thing to save him. **Now walkest thou not charitably** (Am. R., " walkest no longer in love ").

(3) v. 16. **Let not your good be evil spoken of** by your wrong attitude toward those who differ from you; for thus you destroy the value of your " good." v. 18. **Acceptable to God** (Am. R., " Well-pleasing ").

(4) v. 20. **For meat,** for the privilege of eating and drinking what injures others, however harmless to yourselves, **destroy not** (Am. R., " overthrow not ") **the work of God,** " the Christian Church (which is destroyed by such wanton conduct) or the Christian character and standing of an individual." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

(5) v. 21. **It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.** " Stumbleth " is from a noun which means the movable stick of a trap, hence " a trap, a snare, any impediment placed in the way, and causing one to stumble or fall." — *Thayer's Gk. Lex.*

(6) 15: 1, 2. **We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.** " Paul says ' bear ' their infirmities, because the restrictions and limitations laid by this charity on the liberty of the strong are a burden to them." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* And they must do this, for his weaker **neighbor for his**

3. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

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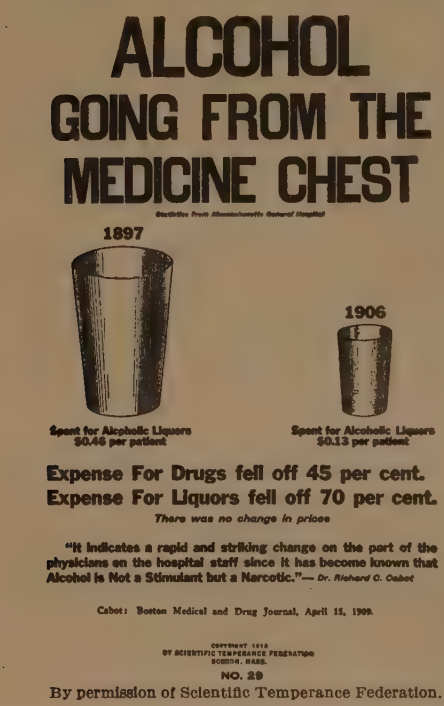
good, for his edification, that is to build him up in character, manhood, fitness for usefulness in the kingdom of God, just as Christ also pleased not himself (Am. R.).

II. APPLICATION OF THESE PRINCIPLES TO THE TEMPERANCE REFORM. Alcohol has many uses besides that for drinking purposes. There are various opinions about drinking certain forms of it, and about the various ways of advancing the Temperance cause, each honestly held by good men. But there is growing more and more unanimity as to methods, and as to the evils and dangers of strong drink, especially among the young.


ALCOHOL
GOING FROM THE
MEDICINE CHEST
1897
1906
Spent for Alcoholic Liquors
$0.46 per patient
Spent for Alcoholic Liquors
$0.13 per patient
Expense For Drugs fell off 45 per cent.
Expense For Liquors fell off 70 per cent.
There was no change in prices
"It indicates a rapid and striking change on the part of the physicians on the hospital staff since it has become known that Alcohol is Not a Stimulant but a Narcotic."— Dr. Richard C. Cabot
Cabot: Boston Medical and Drug Journal, April 15, 1909.
NO. 29

By permission of Scientific Temperance Federation.

Every true-hearted Christian man or woman, every one who is loyal to his country, or to humanity, should take Paul's position; and the more educated, prominent, influential, and high in office and in honor he is the more it is his duty to take it.

1. He will not be a stumblingblock in the way of the weak and the young.

2. He will not do anything to destroy him for whom Christ died.

3. But he will deny himself for their sake.

4. His attitude will be Love and not Selfishness.

And this position will be a blessing both to himself and to those whom he benefits. The definite acts of self-denial for the sake of the children and of others, furnish a large and fruitful field for the culture of charity and heroism. Charles Kingsley says that "any man or woman in any age, under any circumstances, who *will*, *can* live the heroic life and exercise heroic influence"; and especially in giving up rights and privileges for the good of others.

On the other hand, selfishness, disregard of the interests of others, narrows the selfish man, lessens all that is noblest and best in him.

The Magic Skin, of Balzac's story, was fabled to be able to grant every wish for happiness and pleasure; but with every selfish gratification of its possessor it shrank, grew smaller and narrower. His body shrivelled up with every narrowing of his character, till he was stifled to death. Selfishness is this Magic Skin. The whole life grows more narrow and meagre till all that is best in us is stifled.

Two national examples have lately occurred.

1. *China* not long ago decided to exclude from the whole country the use of opium which was injuring a great many of her people. It was even worse than intoxicating drinks in other countries. They refused to allow it to be imported or cultivated. And this was done at great cost to the nation.

2. *Russia* has recently had the most remarkable experience of Empire-wide prohibition of intoxicating liquors, known in the history of the world. Nothing like it has ever occurred before. And it is the more remarkable, because the government itself manufactured the vodka ("a sort of whiskey or brandy generally drunk in Russia") and sold it to the people for the sake of the revenue which amounted to $500,000,000 on a traffic of $1,000,000,000. That fact alone seemed to render prohibition impossible.

Extracts from an article in the *New York Times* of Nov. 19, 1914, are here quoted. "There is prohibition in Russia to-day, prohibition which means that not a drop of

vodka, whiskey, brandy, gin, or any other strong liquor is obtainable from one end to the other of a territory populated by 130,000,000 people and covering one-sixth of the habitable globe.

" The story of how strong drink has been utterly banished from the Russian Empire was related by Michael Demitrovitch Tchelisheff, the man directly responsible for putting an end to Russia's great vice, the vodka habit.

" It should be said in the beginning that the word prohibition in Russia must be taken literally. Its use does not imply a partially successful attempt to curtail the consumption of liquor resulting in drinking in secret places, the abuse of medical licenses and general evasion and subterfuge. It does mean that a vast population who consumed $1,000,000,000 worth of vodka a year ; whose ordinary condition has been described by Russians themselves as ranging from a slight degree of stimulation upward, has been lifted almost in one day from a drunken inertia to sobriety.

" From the day this step was taken, drunkenness vanished in Russia. The results are seen at once in the peasantry ; already they are beginning to look like a different race. The marks of suffering, the pinched looks of illness and improper nourishment have gone from their faces. There has been also a remarkable change in the appearance of their clothes. Their clothes are cleaner, and both the men and women appear more neatly and better dressed. The destitute character of the homes of the poor has been replaced with something like order and thrift.

" In Petrograd and Moscow the effect of these improved conditions is fairly startling. On holidays in these two cities inebriates always filled the police stations and often they lay about on the sidewalks and even in the streets. Things are so different to-day that unattended women may now pass at night through portions of these cities where it was formerly dangerous even for men. Minor crimes and misdemeanors have almost vanished.

" Tchelisheff, the man who virtually accomplished this miracle, was a peasant by birth, originally a house painter by profession, then Mayor of the city of Samara, and now a millionnaire.

" He said of himself : ' I was reared in a small Russian village. There were no schools or hospitals, or any of the improvements we are accustomed to in civilized communities. I picked up an education from old newspapers and stray books. One day I chanced upon a book in the hands of a moujik, which treated of the harmfulness of alcohol. It stated among other things that vodka was a poison.

" ' I was so impressed with this, knowing that everybody drank vodka, that I asked the first physician I met if the statement were true. He said yes. Men drank it, he explained, because momentarily it gave them a sensation of pleasant dizziness. From that time I decided to take every opportunity to discover more about the use of vodka.

" ' It then dawned upon me that Russian bureaucracy did not want the people to become sober, for the reason that it was easier to rule autocratically a drunken mob than a sober people.

" ' This was seven years ago. . . . It was evident that the bureaucracy had been able to obstruct the measure. Minister of Finance Kokovsoff regarded it as a dangerous innovation, depriving the Government of 1,000,000,000 rubles ($500,000,000) yearly, without any method of replacing this revenue.

" ' While I lobbied in Petrograd the Emperor visited the country around Moscow and saw the havoc of vodka.' "

A month after the revolution. " ' Savings banks showed an increase in deposits over the preceding month and over the corresponding month of the preceding year. At the same time there was a boom in the sale of meats, groceries, clothing, dry goods, and house furnishings. The 30,000,000 rubles a day that had been paid for vodka were now being spent for the necessities of life.

" ' The average working week increased from three and four days to six, the numerous holidays of the drinker having been eliminated. The working day also became longer, and the efficiency of the worker was perhaps doubled. Women and children, who seldom were without marks showing the physical violence of the husband and father, suddenly found themselves in an undreamed-of paradise. There were no blows, no insults, and no rough treatment. There was bread on the table, milk for the babies, and a fire in the kitchen.

" ' The second month of abstinence made the manifold advantages so clear to everybody that when we called upon his Majesty to thank him for his orders, he promised that the vodka business of the Government would be given up forever.' "

Discussion. Could such a sudden change be accomplished in our country? If not, why not? If it could be done, then How?

What would be the advantages of the different methods?

Third Example. A Company of Young Men. This story may well be read to the class, to be followed by a discussion. Read to the Kenwood Evangelical Sunday School, Chicago, September 24th, 1911. It may be obtained from the Chicago Law and Order League, 19 So. La Salle St.

A Mother's Love.

A Son's Courageous Action.

"One Sunday morning, a year ago, a party of young men, students in a law school, all of them sons of Christian parents, started out to a grove to spend the sacred day in card playing and wine drinking. As they walked along, laughing and jesting, a church bell in the distance began to ring. One of the men, named George, stopped and told his companions he was going back to the village and to church. They sought to dissuade him but he was firm. Then they gathered in a circle about him and threatened to give him a cold bath in the river. Quietly, calmly, earnestly the young man said:

"'I know you have power enough to put me there till I am drowned; and if you choose you can do so, and I will make no resistance; but listen to what I have to say and then do as you think best.

"'I am two hundred miles from home. My mother is a helpless, bed-ridden invalid. I am her youngest child. My father could not afford to pay for my schooling; but our teacher is a warm friend of my father and offered to take me without charge. He was anxious for me to come, but mother would not consent. The struggle almost cost her what little life was left. At length, after many prayers, she yielded and said I might go. The preparations for my leaving home were soon made. My mother never said a word to me till the morning I was to leave. After I had eaten my breakfast she sent for me, and asked me if everything was ready; I told her I was waiting for the stage. At her request I kneeled beside her bed. With her loving hand upon my head she prayed for her youngest child. Many a night I have dreamed that whole scene over. It is the happiest recollection of my life. I believe to the day of my death I shall be able to repeat every word of that prayer. Then she said:

"'"My precious boy, you never can know the agony of a mother's heart in parting for the last time from her youngest child. When you leave home you will have looked for the last time, this side of the grave, on the face of her who loves you as no other mortal can. Your father cannot afford the expense of your making us visits during the two years that your studies will occupy. I cannot possibly live as long as that. My life has nearly run out. In the far-off, strange place to which you are going there will be no loving mother to give counsel. Seek counsel and help from God. Every Sunday morning, from ten to eleven o'clock, I will spend the hour in prayer for you. Wherever you may be during this sacred hour, when you hear the church bells ring, let your thoughts come back to this chamber where your dying mother will be in prayer for you. But I hear the stage coming. Kiss me — farewell!" Boys, I never expect to see my mother again on earth; but by God's help, I expect to see her in heaven.'

"With tears streaming down his cheeks, George looked into the faces of his companions. Their eyes were moist. The ring they had formed about him opened, and he went on his way to church. Then all quietly threw away their cards and wine flasks and followed him into the church service."

Discussion. How many young men would have the courage of this one?

Are your mothers as anxious for your welfare as was this mother?

A Good Motto for temperance people. It was given by a general to whom an officer reported that he could not hold out any longer because the enemy was in overwhelming numbers; "Don't count the enemy. Beat him."

The Real Question of Temperance Reform lies in the answer to the question whether we will be actuated by Love or Selfishness. And as Spurgeon once said, let us spell "We" with an "I" in it. Will "we," boys and girls as well as men and women, at any cost stand on the side of total abstinence? Let us consider one or two more examples of how it can be done.

DOING THE IMPOSSIBLE.

" ' Now, then,' said the pastor to his newly formed Christian Brotherhood, ' we have fifty-five members ; we have a constitution and by-laws and a dozen committees. We are organized to do Christian work in this community. I should like to hear from each of you what you understand by that.'

" Different members gave different answers. Most of the replies were vague and indefinite.

" ' Suppose we outline our working program like this,' said the pastor. ' We are a Christian Brotherhood organized to do the " impossible."

" ' 1. To drive the saloon out of the town.

" ' 2. To get rid of vice.

" ' 3. To get indifferent men to go to church.

" ' 4. To convince every one of the wickedness of selfishness and greed.

" ' 5. To teach purity to the boys and girls.

" ' 6. To convert Old Man Lowe.'

" At the last item the brotherhood looked at one another aghast. ' Old Man Lowe ' was the worst drunkard and gambler in town ; every one thought him an abandoned reprobate.

" But the pastor went on calmly : ' Does any one need to be converted more than Old Man Lowe ? '

" No one spoke.

" ' Has any one ever tried to convert him ? '

" No one ever had. He was ' a hopeless case.'

" ' Did not Jesus come to save just such men ? '

" Every one agreed that He did.

" ' Did any of you ever speak to him or try to bring him to Christ ?'

" Silence again.

" ' Is Christ powerless to save him ? '

" No one dared say that He was.

" ' Let us try to save him, then,' said the pastor.

" One by one the members of the brotherhood went in turn to 'Old Man Lowe,' and pleaded with him. After twelve men had been to see him on successive days the old man's heart melted. He was a saved man — almost swept into the Kingdom of Heaven by sheer amazement that these busy merchants and professional men should think enough of him to come and talk with him about the welfare of his soul. He himself had almost forgotten that he had one.

" A good many souls are never saved because we do not seek to save them. Often we limit God's power to save by our own refusal to attempt the ' impossible.' The Christian is here especially to do the ' impossible,' by means of the power of the gospel, which can save even to the uttermost." — *Youth's Companion.*

Wm. H. Ridgeway wrote in *The Sunday School Times* a while ago : " Coatesville was not much of a place until we began to make the best boiler steel in the world. We have only to turn out men who are as superior among men as our boiler plate is among steel, and the world will take off its hat to us and write the name of Coatesville in the stars also. Listen to them!

" ' That Coatesville must be a wonderful town. Every year they put one young man into the Y.M.C.A. secretaryship and one into the ministry. Its business men discount all bills. None of the working-men drink a drop. They nearly all own their nice little homes. There isn't a man in town who doesn't belong to church. The mill owners all live right there and send their children to the public schools. They are all Christian men and set their workmen a good example. The churches and Sunday-schools are packed full. Real estate is in such demand you can't buy any.' "

Close this lesson with a little Dialogue, which was very effective when my class of boys gave the answers in concert before the whole school.

The Superintendent speaks : " Boys, the men that we see around us, on the street, in the stores, in this church, business men, leaders, givers, authors, governors, presidents, will grow old and feeble, and sooner or later will die. Who will take their places, and be the men then ? "

Boys. " We boys."

Supt. " There are thousands of drunkards in our land, failures, wrecked through strong drink. This has been so age after age. If there are to be any a few years from now, who that are living to-day will fill their places ? "

Boys. "Some boys living to-day."
Supt. "Which of you can be certain that you shall not be of this number?"
Boys. "Those who refuse to touch intoxicating liquors; who sign the temperance pledge and keep it."
Supt. "Will you promise? Will you sign? Will you decide NOW?"
Boys. "WE WILL."
Let each teacher give the class an opportunity to sign the pledge if any member has not already done it.

WE HEREBY PLEDGE OURSELVES TO ABSTAIN FROM ALL INTOXICATING LIQUORS AS A BEVERAGE,

AND TO DO ALL WE CAN TO PERSUADE OTHERS TO ABSTAIN.

LESSON VIII. — November 19.

FROM MELITA TO ROME. — Acts 28:11–31.

PRINT vs. 11–24, 30, 31. COMMIT vs. 30, 31.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.* — ROM. 1:16.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

Emerson tells us that "books do not speak till they are spoken to." We need not only to see the words that describe Paul's conduct and character, but to listen to their inner meaning, to see the missionary in the new and beautiful light which the trials and difficulties he has been passing through have brought to the surface, which has made him shine as Moses' face shone when he came down from the Mount.

It is good for the children, and for all of us, to see how a cultured Christian acts under difficult circumstances, to see his human side, to have done for us as to Paul, what in reference to Washington, Owen Wister calls the "unfreezing of Washington."

LEARN BY HEART.

Rom. 8:28; vs. 30, 31.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — Paul sailed from Malta in Feb. A.D. 60, for Rome.

Place. — From Malta 80–100 miles to Syracuse.

Syracuse, one day's sail to Rhegium, Italy.

Rhegium 180 miles to Puteoli.

Puteoli, by land 140 miles to Rome.

Nero, emperor of Rome.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The story of the sea journey to Rome.
The story of the land journey through Italy to Rome.
Rome in St. Paul's day.
The arrival at Rome and Paul's situation there for two years.
By what means was he able to make known the Gospel.
The epistles Paul wrote at Rome.
His subsequent life.
His triumphant death.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Ramsay's *St. Paul the Traveller*; his *Pictures of the Apostolic Church*; and his *Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day* (1914).

The Man Paul, by Robert E. Speer, D.D.

Any good history of Rome will be helpful. S. Russell Forbes's *Footsteps of St. Paul in Rome* (Nelson) and Edgar S. Shumway's *A Day in Ancient Rome* (Heath & Co., Boston) are both very helpful; Stalker's *St. Paul* is especially good for this lesson.

Lightfoot's Essays on "St. Paul at Rome," and "Cæsar's Household" in his work on *Philippians* are valuable.

Mornings in the College Chapel, by Prof. Francis G. Peabody of Harvard, contains many practical three minute talks, of which XIV., XVIII., and XLIV., apply to this lesson.

St. Paul's Autobiography in his own words in Scripture. Very good. (Revell.)

WRITINGS OF PAUL DURING HIS IMPRISONMENT.

The Four Epistles. — To Philemon, the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians were written during the first captivity, A.D. 60–62.

The Acts. — Probably published about its close, A.D. 62 or 63.

1 Timothy and Titus. — During the intervening years.

2 Timothy. — During his second imprisonment, A.D. 66.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Closing Scenes in the Life of Paul. The Climax of His Life.

I. THE VOYAGE TO PUTEOLI; ON THE WAY TO ROME, vs. 11–14.
II. TRAVELLING BY LAND FROM THE BAY OF NAPLES TO ROME, vs. 14, 15.
III. PAUL IN ROME. THE CONFERENCE WITH THE JEWS, vs. 16–29.
IV. PAUL'S WORK IN ROME. THE GOSPEL FOR THE GENTILES, vs. 30, 31.
V. THE CLOSING YEARS OF PAUL'S LIFE.

11. And after three months we departed in a ship of Ăl-ĕx-ăn'drĭ-a, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Căs'tŏr and Pŏl'lux.

I. **THE VOYAGE TO PUTEOLI; ON THE WAY TO ROME**, vs. 11–14. It was in the early spring in that southern region, in the latter part of February, when Captain Julius, with his prisoners, including Paul and his companions, again embarked for Rome in a grain-ship from Alexandria, which had been wintering in another part of Malta. The prisoners had lost everything in the wreck, and when they left Malta they were supplied with whatever they needed for their journey to Rome. Paul and his companions who had done so much for the Maltese were especially **honored with many honors** (v. 10).

The ship was named the *Dioscuri*, or *The Twin Brothers*, as in Am. R., or *Castor and Pollux* who were the twin brothers. Instead of the name being painted on the vessel, their figures adorned the prow. They were patrons of sailors and were well known. This sign was used because men could not read. So in olden times signs were used for taverns, as in London, "The Elephant and Castle," "The Boar's Head," or "The Red Lion."

The First Landing was made at Syracuse the capital of Sicily on the east side of the island, a one day's trip of 80 miles with favoring southern winds, for they were sailing to the north.

Here they remained three days, either because there was no wind, or because they waited for a favorable wind in order to get through the strait of Messina between Sicily and Italy. Syracuse was famous for its memorable siege during the Peloponnesian War, when the Athenian army was defeated and Demosthenes was taken prisoner, B.C. 414. The island is now a part of Italy.

The Second Port was Rhegium, the modern Reggio, 80 miles northward from Syracuse. It was situated on the extreme S.W. coast of Italy, on the lower part of the strait that separates it from Sicily. To reach this port required nearly two days, for they made a wide circuit (Am. R.) with frequent tacking or alteration of the ship's course on account of head winds, and "by good seamanship were able to work up to Rhegium."

The Third and Last Sea-voyage was from Rhegium 180 miles to Puteoli. From Rhegium they sailed northward through the narrow strait between Sicily and the main land of Italy. Fifteen miles brought them opposite the ancient city of Messina, which together with Rhegium was destroyed by a terrible earthquake Dec. 28, 1908. A few miles farther on the strait grew narrower and the ship sailed between the well-known dangers Scylla and Charybdis, so often referred to in literature, and still requiring very careful seamanship. In Homer's time it was said that scarcely a vessel was able to pass through this swift and narrow strait.

"Dire Scylla there a scene of horror forms,
And here Charybdis fills the deep with storms."

"Scarce the famed Argo passed these raging floods,
The sacred Argo, filled with demigods." — *Homer.*

Charybdis was the celebrated rock and whirlpool on the coast of Sicily, described in Greek mythology as "a sea monster which three times a day sucks in the sea and discharges it again in a terrible whirlpool," "like water cauldroned o'er a furious fire,"

"Here Charybdis holds her boistrous reign."

12. And landing at Sўr'ą-cūse, we tarried *there* three days.

13. And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhē'ġĭ-um: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Pū-tē'o-lī:

Scylla was a projecting rock on the Italian side of the narrow strait, represented as a fearful monster barking like a dog with twelve feet and six long necks.

"Each clubbed into a head terrific, and each head with fangs around in triple row."

"Such a monster as no eye can meet,
Not though a god should pass her dire retreat."
— *Homer.*

"Then catch one glimpse of Scylla's cell,
And hear those grisly hell-hounds yell."
— *Vergil.*

In two days, still sailing northward, they reached Puteoli on the north shore of the bay of Naples, 180 miles from Rhegium. This was the end of their sea journey of 340 or 350 miles from Malta.

Puteoli (the modern Pozzuoli) was situated on the bay of Naples eight miles N.W. of Neapolis (the modern Naples). It was indebted for its importance to its excellent

Puteoli (The Modern Pozzuoli).

harbor. It was the principal port south of Rome, 140 miles away. Nearly all the Alexandrian and a great part of the Spanish trade with Italy was brought hither. A mole 2 miles long with twenty-five arches stretched itself into the sea at the entrance of this bay, alongside of which the vessels as they arrived cast anchor for the delivery of their freight and passengers.

This mole "points out to us, as it were, the very footsteps of the apostle as he passed from the ship to the land." — *Professor Hackett.*

Puteoli holds Vesuvius in sight with its ever ascending smoke and occasional flame. Nineteen years after Paul caught his first view of this mountain, there occurred that great eruption which buried Pompeii at its foot so deep that it was unseen and unknown, except the tops of walls, for 1700 years. Its unearthing began in 1775, and from this curiously came the best proof of the truth of verse 14, that Paul **found brethren**, Christians there. For an inscription was found in the ruins which read

O CHRISTIAN, REJOICE IN THE FIRE

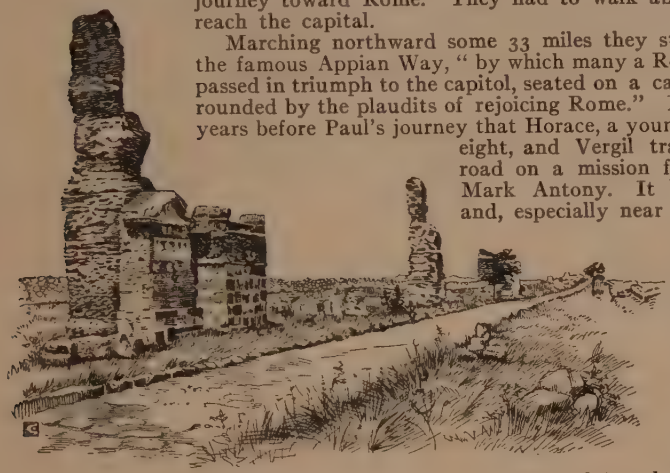
showing that there not only Christians, but Christian martyrs among the little company with whom St. Paul and Luke held sweet converse for seven days at Puteoli, that flourishing commercial city.

The delay gave opportunity for the Christians to send word to Rome that Paul had reached Italy and was on his way to the eternal city.

14. Where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rōme.

15. And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Ăp′pĭ-ī fō′rŭm, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

II. **TRAVELLING BY LAND FROM THE BAY OF NAPLES TO ROME**, vs. 14, 15. Having rested seven days at Puteoli Paul and his companions began their land journey toward Rome. They had to walk about 140 miles to reach the capital.



The Appian Way, Rome. From a photograph.

Marching northward some 33 miles they struck at Sinuessa the famous Appian Way, "by which many a Roman general had passed in triumph to the capitol, seated on a car of victory, surrounded by the plaudits of rejoicing Rome." It was about 100 years before Paul's journey that Horace, a young man of twenty-eight, and Vergil travelled over this road on a mission from Augustus to Mark Antony. It was well paved, and, especially near Rome, was lined with beautiful and costly buildings and monumental tombs, "the massive ruins of which still excite our admiration."

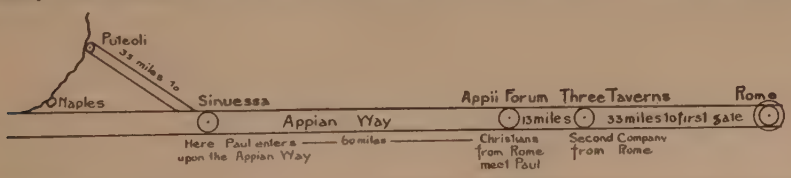
Sixty miles farther along this road they came to **Appii Forum**, *i.e.* "the Market of Appius" (Am.R.).

Here the first delegation of the Christian church of Rome were waiting to welcome Paul and Luke to the capital.

A second delegation met them 13 miles farther on at **The Three Taverns**, or rather "The Three Shops" or as we would call them stores, not "taverns" in the modern sense.

Notice that these Christians had come at no small cost, as they had to walk 46 miles to Appii Forum and 33 miles to Three Taverns, and walk the same distance back to Rome.

Whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage. "The sight of those friendly faces cheered Paul, and he thanked God. In spite of alleviating circum-



stances and the Divine encouragement, the strain and hardship of the voyage must have told on his delicate frame, and physical weakness caused low spirits. We see in his letters written from Rome plain signs of his longing for sympathetic friends; and we can imagine the joy which he felt when his Roman friends, some known to him of old, some new, greeted his arrival in these two wayside towns." — *Ramsay.*

The walk back to Rome together must have been not only cheering, but "a feast of reason and a flow of Soul" while "in communion sweet" they "quaffed immortality and joy." The Roman Christians had much to tell about the progress of the Gospel in Rome, and they would be comforted and sustained by listening to Paul's account of his work and the boundless goodness of God in his personal experiences.

"It is a great thing to be in close companionship with a good and true man." Few things have so great an educational power over both mind and heart as the personal friendship of the wise and good. It is wisdom that kindles wisdom, character that inspires character, life that creates life.

Paul had received the answer to the prayer, "Give me, O God, the power to make

Julius von Schnorr.

Paul reaches Rome in Chains.

all my sorrow music for the world"; and both Paul and the Roman Christians must have felt their hearts burning within them, as they heard the cheering word.

"One cry of '*Courage!*' amid the strife,
So weighted for me with death or life —
How would it have nerved my soul to strain
Thro' the whirl of the coming surge again."

III. **ST. PAUL IN ROME. HIS CONFERENCES WITH THE JEWS**, vs. 16–29. **When we came to** ("entered into," Am. R.) **Rome, the centurion**, Julius, who had become the friend of Paul, **delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard.** (This sentence is not given in either Revision, but the fact is doubtless true.) This officer, if the prefect of the Pretorium is referred to, was Burrus, a liberal-minded man, and one of the few good statesmen of this corrupt age and city. He was probably first taken to the Forum (near where the Arch of Titus was afterwards built), which was the centre of imperial power and imperial magnificence, and associated also with the most glorious recollections of the republic. The Forum was to Rome what the Acropolis was to Athens, the heart of all the characteristic interest of the place. Here was the *Milliarium Aureum* (the golden milestone), to which the roads of all the provinces converged. All around were the stately buildings which were raised in the closing years of the republic and by the earlier emperors. In front was the Capitoline Hill, illustrious long before the invasion of the Gauls. Close on the left, covering that hill whose name is associated in every modern European language with the notion of imperial splendor, were the vast ranges of the *palace*, the "house of Cæsar" (Phil. 4:22).

Paul was not sent to prison, "for it was against the law to put a Roman into prison without trial" (*S. Russell Forbes*), but was permitted to dwell by himself, "in his own hired house," probably because of the kind terms in which Festus reported the case, and Paul's noble conduct and helpfulness on the voyage, as related by Julius the centurion, which would combine to influence such a man as Burrus to

16. And when we came to Rōme, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.

17. And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men *and* brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

18. Who, when they had examined me, would have let *me* go, because there was no cause of death in me.

19. But when the Jews spake against *it*, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of.

20. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see *you*, and to speak with *you:* because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

21. And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee.

22. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

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grant to Paul every privilege and comfort within his power. **With a soldier that kept,** " guarded," Am. R., **him.** " He was coupled by a slight chain round the right wrist to the left of a soldier, and thus shackled was allowed to be at large within the palace, or even, if he could afford it, to hire a lodging for himself without the walls, but within the rules or prescribed limits, but otherwise free from restraint." — *Lewin.*

Paul explains to the leaders of the Jews why he was a prisoner at Rome. **17. After three days** for getting rested and settled in his own hired house, Paul called together the Jewish leaders and officers of the synagogues " of which there were seven in Rome." The Jews in Rome at this time were a large and organized community. " He explained his case to them in as polite a way as was consistent with truth : he was delivered to the Romans (he avoids saying that the Jews did this): the Roman authorities found him innocent and wished to release him, but as the Jews opposed his release, he had been forced to appeal to Cæsar, but not in any spirit of revenge or accusation against his nation. And now, having come to Rome, his first act was to intreat his own people to speak with him." — *Ramsay.*

20. I am a true Jew he declares, and it is **for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.** His whole teaching and work was for the fulfilment of this promise.

21. We neither received letters out of Judea, etc. It is not said that they had never heard anything about Paul, for it is implied that they had heard, but nothing of the events which led to his being a prisoner. **Neither any of the brethren,** etc. Am. R., " Nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak any harm of thee." Either those who came were from other parts of Palestine, or the later occurrences under Festus and Agrippa were so recent that no Jews had had time to arrive at Rome. Ramsay thinks that they were not quite truthful. They may not have learned much of the real facts, and were uncertain what to believe. " They made no allusion to the existence of Christians in Rome ; yet they must have been well aware that a Roman congregation existed, and that people of their nation belonged to it. The whole brief reply is evasive, false, and superficially polite." — *Ramsay.*

The Second Conference with the Jews. A Public Meeting. **23.** By mutual arrangement on an appointed day **there came many to him** (Am. R., " they came to him into his lodgings in great numbers "), and Paul **expounded** the gospel of **the kingdom,** its relations to the Jewish beliefs and Scriptures. **And testified.** Testifying while he expounded, bearing witness to the truth of what he said ; from his own experience ; in his conversion, in the revelations God had made to him, in the comfort and help he had received, in the improvement of his own life. These are the two ways in which we now must lead men to Christ and salvation. **Out of the law of Moses, and out of the Prophets.** These were common ground. All believed them. So Paul placed the prophecies of the kingdom of God, and of the Messiah to come, side by side with the

23. And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and *out of* the Prophets, from morning till evening.

24. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

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life, death, and teachings of Jesus, and showed the Jews how perfectly the latter were the fulfilment of the former.

This he did all one day **from morning till evening**, following the same lines as in his speech before Agrippa which we studied not long ago.

Paul as a Bible Student. Secretary Robert E. Speer has written an article with this title in the *Sunday School Times* which is well worth the teachers' careful study. I quote some paragraphs. " Paul's speeches recorded in the Book of Acts contain quotations from, and allusions to, Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 1 Chronicles, Psalms, Isaiah, Job, Amos, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Micah, Zechariah, Daniel, Hosea, Habakkuk. And his Epistles teem with references to the Old Testament. Westcott and Hort in their Greek New Testament find seventy-four quotations from the Old Testament in Romans, twenty-nine in 1 Corinthians, twenty in 2 Corinthians, thirteen in Galatians, twenty-one in Ephesians, six in Philippians, four in Colossians, seven in 1 Thessalonians, nine in 2 Thessalonians, two in 1 Timothy, four in 2 Timothy, three in Titus. Their frequency shows how saturated Paul's mind was with the ideas and the language of the Hebrew Scriptures.

" For it must be remembered that both to Paul and to our Lord the Old Testament was their only Bible. We deem the New Testament, made up so largely of what was written of Jesus and what Paul wrote, as the richer portion of the Bible. But Paul had not even one written Gospel.

" He used the Old Testament rather for confirmation and illustration, more as a fountain of living voices than as a record of vanished deeds. It witnessed to the ever-present God. That was its great lesson.

" Paul believed in the trustworthiness of this Bible.

" It is pathetic to think that he probably owned no copy of his own. The Old Testament Scriptures were in cumbersome rolls, and they were too expensive for individuals to own. On his long journeys Paul could scarcely have carried them with him if he had been able to purchase them. This we do know, that Paul had the words of this Bible in his heart, that where he went that treasure went with him. All that the Psalmist sang Paul could sing also.

> "'Oh how love I thy law!
> It is my meditation all the day.
> Thy commandments make me wiser than mine enemies;
> For they are ever with me.
> Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
> And light unto my path.'"

The Division of the Jews into Two Parties. 24. **And some believed**, were persuaded, were induced to believe. **And some believed not.**

Illustrations. " The same fire reddens the gold and burns the dross; under the same threshing sledge the grain is cleansed and the chaff is crushed out; by the same press beam the oil is separated from the dregs." — *Augustine.* The same sun melts the wax and hardens the clay. The same sunshine and rain which cause the living tree to grow and flourish are the most potent influences to bring the dead tree to decay.

Paul's Warning. **They departed, after that Paul had spoken one word**, not denouncing, but seeking to persuade them from their own prophet, Isaiah; and to show them that their rejection of his message was no sign that it was not true. For the warning had been uttered by the **Holy Spirit through Esaias** (Greek form of Isaiah) nearly 800 years before, to their ancestors, who refused to listen, refused to obey their God, would not see the signs of the times; and the result of their refusal was that Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple burned, the nation carried away captive to Babylon.

Those whom Paul was now warning, had only to open their Bibles, and look back six hundred years, to see almost a perfect picture of the terrible desolation that actually came upon the Jewish nation ten years later, when the Romans destroyed

30. And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him,

31. Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

Jerusalem, and the Temple, and the Jews became no longer a nation, but have been a race for almost two thousand years, still waiting for their return, which is probably not far away.

27. Heart . . . is waxed, grown, **gross**, dull, stupid, so that it was difficult to make any impression upon it. **Their eyes have they closed ; lest they should see.** They did not wish to see. If they had seen, they would have had to give up their bad habits, their sinful pleasures, their unjust riches, their selfish living, and everything that was contrary to the Kingdom of Christ, and be loyal in love, and faith in the Jesus they refused. The statement occurs in Isaiah, 4 times in the Gospels, in the Epistle to the Romans, and here in the Acts. (Isa. 6 : 9 ; Acts 28 : 26, 27 ; Rom. 11 : 8 ; Matt. 13 : 14 ; Mark 4 : 12 ; Lu. 8 : 10 ; John 12 : 40.)

28. Then again Paul turns to the Gentiles. If the Jews will not receive the Gospel, they will. In accordance with Isaiah's prophecy, the nation was cut down by the Exile like a tree, leaving only a stump, but a new shoot would spring up, the nation would be restored, and the new shoot would be greater than the former tree. Jesus with his gospel was the new shoot that sprang up from the Jewish commonwealth, which was cut down to a mere stump by the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70 ; and that shoot has already grown to be a far larger, nobler, more fruitful tree than the Jewish nation ever was, and all the visions and prophecies of the Old Testament are being realized and fulfilled through the New.

It is well for us all, especially in our younger days, that we reap what we have sown ; that we cannot be dull of hearing God's voice, with eyes closed to his teachings, and come to a good end ; but that God with all his heart desires that we should turn again that He might heal us.

IV. **PAUL'S LIFE AND WORK IN ROME. THE GOSPEL FOR THE GENTILES**, vs. 30, 31. The closing word of verse 28, *ākoúsantai*, **They** (the Gentiles) **will hear**, is the last word of the apostle Paul recorded in the Acts.

And *ākōlútōs*, " unhindered," is the last word of Luke the historian of his life in the Acts.

Knowling well finds in these two final words a note of triumph blending with the note of sadness. The future of Paul's message is assured.

Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house. Here he held a reception for **all that came in unto him**, every one was welcome. The fact that they must come to him, because he could not go to them, created a sifting process, through which only the earnest and serious inquirers would come to him, and no time or strength was wasted.

31. Preaching . . . teaching. Paul's personal work was continued during these two years, **with all confidence** (Am. R., " boldness "), implying that he had freedom of speech, and was hopeful of results.

" *Paul in prison* was doing some of the most important work of his life, work that has rendered him immortal in his usefulness. From his prison there flowed a river of life, that has broadened and deepened as it has flowed through the centuries, and is still gladdening the city of God."

First. From his receptions in his own hired house as we have seen above.

Second. Through the soldiers of the guard, who were " from the imperial guard," the flower of the Roman army. Every few hours the guard was changed, so that " in this way there might be six or eight with him every twenty-four hours." Paul must have spoken to these soldiers about their souls, and salvation by Jesus Christ, and they would be won by the sweetness of his spirit, his patience, earnestness, and love.

Third. From his Writings. Four epistles, those to Philemon, Ephesians, Colossians, and the Philippians were probably written during this captivity ; Titus and 1 Timothy after his release, and 2 Timothy during his second imprisonment, not long before his martyrdom. While it seemed a great loss that he should be shut out from preaching the Gospel for 2 or 3 years, yet his books have enabled him to preach for centuries instead of years, and to millions upon millions instead of thousands.

Examples. " Everybody knows that Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* was the fruit

of his labors in Bedford jail ; and as the joy bells of the new Jerusalem kept ringing in his ears, he forgot the vileness of the ' cage ' wherein he was confined.

" Savonarola wrote his commentaries on Psalms 31 and 51 during his month of imprisonment before his execution."

Fourth. Acts probably, if not written, at least gave Luke an opportunity to consult with Paul about his life and work, and take notes that would make his writing accurate. " What a trumpet-note of joy and courage and victory resounds from the first page to the last of the Lucan history ! "

Two modern instances may be very helpful and suggestive.

An American Prisoner's Mission. " Sixteen years ago, in Texas," states the *Youth's Companion* (1914, I think), " a man named Paul Graynor killed another man in a disreputable quarrel. He was sentenced to imprisonment for forty years. He has now been in the state prison fifteen years.

" After his imprisonment a change came over the man. It was not merely sorrow and penitence for his crime, but a complete change of heart and purpose. He accepted his lot and undertook to make the best use possible of his opportunities.

" He became a sort of prison evangelist. Under his influence at least fifteen convicts have been converted, and having completed their terms of sentence, are leading useful lives ; twenty-five still in the prison give good reason for believing that they will become righteous men and useful citizens.

" He has done more than preach. He has organized classes and taught stenography. Six of his pupils now hold good positions, four of them as court stenographers. He has also taught Spanish, bookkeeping and commercial arithmetic. His school within the prison has become a door of hope to many of his fellow convicts.

" Recently an effort was made to pardon Graynor. It was successful, and he was at liberty to go forth a free man.

" But now comes the strangest and most interesting part of the story. Graynor refused to accept a pardon. . . . He sent word to the governor that he was worth nothing to the world outside, but that within the prison walls he had found a place of usefulness among his fellow convicts.

" Many a life that suffers from inevitable limitations which constitute a life imprisonment amid uncongenial surroundings, might become radiant and beautiful if it could discover the secret of this convict. Many a heart beating its life out in bitter and unavailing protests against its unhappy conditions might become blessed in becoming a blessing to others."

A Japanese Prisoner's Work for Christ. Delavan Leonard Pierson, in a recent *Sunday School Times*, tells a similar story of usefulness.

" Some years ago, before religious liberty was proclaimed in Japan, a young man named Futagawa Ito became interested in Christianity, and was arrested on the nominal charge of wearing a sword, but really because of his new faith. Ito was put in prison, and was compelled to wear around his neck an iron collar with five chains. When in his cell these chains were attached to the wall and floor, but when the prisoner was out of doors they were held by five soldiers. After having suffered for some time as a horrible criminal, Ito's exemplary conduct gave him favor with the keeper of the prison, and he was allowed to talk with the soldiers and others near him. It was not long before between seven and eight hundred — including magistrates, keepers, and prisoners — heard from Ito the gospel of Christ, and eighty of these were converted, and began to study the Bible.

" Christian missionaries have shown us how to turn every circumstance of life into a means of advancing the kingdom of Christ. In storm and fair weather, on land and sea, on the field and on furlough, among princes and prisoners, in prosperity and adversity, they are ever mindful of their high calling to be ambassadors of Christ."

V. **THE CLOSING YEARS OF PAUL'S LIFE.** The Acts closes with the two years of Paul's imprisonment. But it is generally believed that his death was several years later. Eusebius the historian (A.D. 264–349) states the common belief of the early churches in these words : " After defending himself successfully it is currently reported that the apostle again went forth to proclaim the gospel, and afterward came to Rome a second time and was martyred under Nero. None know the place of Paul's burial. " We, also, careless of a monument by the grave, should build it in the world — a monument by which men may be taught to remember, not where we died, but where we lived." — *Ruskin.*

" All must be struck by his calm heroism, as he faced death almost alone and in the face of seeming disaster to the cause he knew himself, as no other, to represent.

"Paul was the type of 'the Victory that overcometh the world.'"

A defeat? Never! "and no one has given a better answer to it than Harnack by asking, Since when did the early Christians regard martyrdom as a defeat? Is the death of Christ, or of Stephen, in the mind of the author of Acts a defeat? is it not rather a triumph?"

What can be better for any human being than to be able to say with Paul "**I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.**"

In St. Paul's Cathedral in London is a recumbent statue resting in a plain sarcophagus. Beneath the figure are engraved the words:

Sacred to the Memory of General Charles George Gordon,

who at all times and everywhere
Gave his strength to the weak
His substance to the poor
His sympathy to the suffering
His heart to God.

LESSON IX. — November 26.

A LIVING SACRIFICE. — Romans 12.

PRINT vs. 1-8. COMMIT vs. 6-8.

GOLDEN TEXT. — ***Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service.*** — ROMANS 12:1.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The teacher should give his class as good a general idea of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, as can be given in the brief time at his disposal.

The first eleven chapters are doctrinal, teaching and illustrating some great principles of the Christian life. With this chapter he shows the conduct which naturally flows from a godly spirit, and a transformed nature. On these we are to dwell in this lesson, and apply them to our own modern life.

Probably we shall not be able to impress them all on the lives of our scholars in one lesson, but we may select those which are most needed by one or another of them in their circumstances.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 1, 2, 21, 22.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Written in the winter of 57–58, or early in the spring of A.D. 58, about 2 years before Paul reached Rome.

Place. — Written in Corinth near the close of Paul's last visit of three months there.

Sent to Rome "by one Phœbe who is an active, perhaps official member of the Church at Cenchreæ the harbor of Corinth."

The Emperor of Rome at this time was Nero.

Language, was Greek. "It seems strange to the uninitiated, that a letter to the Latin Romans should be written in Greek. But for more than two centuries Greek was the predominant language of the main body of those who would be readers of the Epistle."

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Romans are so many and varied and good that only a few of the choicest, and those best adapted to Sunday school teachers, can be named here.

The Expositor's Greek Testament, by Prof. James Denney, D.D. is very fine and helpful even to those who cannot read the Greek text. Probably the most suggestive commentary on Romans is Lyman Abbott's *Illustrated Commentary*, *American Commentary*, *Commentary* by C. Hodge, by J. A. Beet, by Sadler, by Godet. *International Critical Com. Commentary*, *Logical and Historical*, by Prof. James M. Stifler, D.D. *Word Studies*, by Prof. M. R. Vincent. *The New Century Bible. The Westminster New Testament.*

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Christian Life, and Practical Applications of its Principles to Modern Daily Life.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.
FIRST: THE CONSECRATED LIFE AND TRANSFORMED SPIRIT, vs. 1, 2.
SECOND: THE PRACTICAL DUTIES WHICH PROCEED FROM THEM.
SECTION ONE. CONDUCT IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH, vs. 3–8.
In eight particulars.
SECTION TWO. THE LAW OF LOVE IN ITS MANIFOLD APPLICATIONS TO DAILY LIFE, vs. 9–21.
In twelve particulars.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Paul's Epistle to the Romans.
The connection between the Doctrinal and the Practical.
The living Sacrifice.
Conformed *versus* Transformed.
Each one of the practical duties applied to our modern life.

I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

The Epistle to the Romans is divided into two great Sections.

The first section, chs. 1–11, is an "exposition of what Paul distinctively calls 'my Gospel.' . . . No one who read the first eleven chapters of the Epistle could meet the Apostle as a stranger on anything essential in Christianity as he understood it. . . . It vindicates once for all the central facts, truths and experiences, without which Christianity cannot exist. . . . The one fundamental doctrine, for Paul, is the doctrine of Justification by Faith. That is not part of his Gospel, it is the whole of it. . . . Paul's teaching is that Justification regenerates, and that nothing else does." — *Exp. Gk. Test.*

The second section begins with the 12th chapter which we study for our lesson to-day, and contains practical applications of the truths in the previous section. "Paul has no doctrines which do not imply a corresponding practice. The two sections are not independent of each other. On the contrary the second part of the Epistle is nothing but the application of the first."

The general subject of to-day's lesson is therefore:

THE APPLICATION OF CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES TO MODERN DAILY LIFE.

RIGHT MORAL CONDUCT TOWARDS OUR FELLOW MEN IS THE FRUIT OF FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.

FIRST: A CONSECRATED LIFE, AND A TRANSFORMED SPIRIT IS THE SOURCE OF THE TRUE DAILY LIFE, vs. 1, 2. **I beseech you by the mercies of God.** "By all that God has done to save and bless man." "The highest motive and the most powerful which can be brought to bear upon men." **Present** the technical term for bringing an offering to God. **Your bodies.** "The body is in view here as the instrument by which *all* human service is rendered to God." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* It must not, therefore, be defiled by any yielding of it as an instrument of sin, for the works of the flesh that defile the temple of God, which temple ye are (1 Cor. 3 : 16, 17).

A living sacrifice. *Living* as opposed to the slain animals offered by the Jews. "This seems to be the only case in which the new life as a whole is spoken of by Paul as a sacrifice — a thank-offering — to God." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* "We make our sacrifice to God, not by slaying or mutilating our bodies, but by filling them with a new life, and consecrating them to a new service. It is a consecration, not a destruction, of life." — *L. Abbott.*

Which is your reasonable service. "A service which befits your reason." — *New Century Bible.* A service rendered by your spiritual nature. Hence as rendered in Am. R., "**Your spiritual service**, as differing from any bodily forms and manifestations and expressions of worship. But the Greek means also reasonable, rational service, worthy of reasonable beings.

Consecration of ourselves, body and spirit, to God and his service as illustrated in the life and teachings of Jesus, is the highest, greatest, noblest, most reasonable, thing any man can do. It is like loyalty to our country; not to be loyal is one of the saddest positions any man can take, as sad and desolate as Edward Everett Hale's *Man Without a Country.* Consecration of ourselves to God and his kingdom, loyalty to Christ and his Cause, is the greatest privilege God has granted to man.

2. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God.

"We lay in dust life's glory dead;
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be."

Emphasize the fact that the offering of ourselves to God is a living sacrifice. It is full of life, richer, fuller, more glorious than any other life can be. Christ wants disciples that are alive, full of life, the life of eternal youth who "mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

"Call to mind some of the things which Jesus regards as secondary goods: wealth, whether much or little, physical comfort, reputation for piety, even life itself. All these Jesus declares are to be sacrificed when they come into opposition with the supreme good.

"But they are to be sacrificed because the supreme good is worth more than they. The man who sold all he had to buy the field with a treasure in it, the merchant who sold all his pearls that he might buy the one extraordinary pearl, these men did not count themselves as suffering loss in the exchange. The thing obtained was worth more than the things given. This is Jesus' very simple philosophy of sacrifice." — *Biblical World.*

The Transformed Man is the natural result or accompaniment of the consecrated man.

And be not conformed to this world, the Age in which you live. (Am. R., "Be not fashioned according to.") "The will which the divine spirit now animates must seek, in its own action, to break away from the customs imposed upon it by the surrounding life." — *W. Douglas Mackenzie.* Many of these customs exist not only in society, — as for instance the use of alcoholic drink, and the treatment of the poor, and of other races, and of the weak, — but also in business and political methods. The new life should keep us from conforming to anything unworthy of the highest Christian spirit.

But be ye transformed, "a word used of Christ's transfiguration," **by the renewing of your mind**, an inward spiritual change of the soul nature, even as Christ's visible glory in his transfiguration was the outshining of his divine nature as the Son of God. "The renewing of the mind is the work of God's Spirit indeed, but one which a man must energetically put in operation." — *Pres. Mackenzie.*

"While Consecration is the *act* of a moment, it is the *work* of a life time."

Here we find the source of the virtues which are taught in the remainder of this chapter. "Moral conduct is the fruit of spiritual life. Essential to true life is oneness with God; and he who is at one with God will possess a godly nature, and out of that nature will flow a godly life and conduct." — *Abbott.*

"Out of the heart are the issues of life."

A "*New* earth is always the result of a new heaven."

"*Heaven* is a prepared place, but let it not be forgotten that it is for a prepared people."

The great work of the teacher is to lead his scholars to consecrate themselves to God and Jesus Christ His Son. The training in the virtues that follow may aid him, for when he studies these fruits of the spirit, and tries to practice them, he may feel the absolute necessity of seeking for the new heart from which they naturally flow.

SECOND: PRACTICAL DUTIES WHICH PROCEED FROM THE CONSECRATED AND TRANSFORMED LIFE, vs. 3–21. "The Holy Spirit by the hand of Paul has indited here a chapter of Christian Proverbs." — *Wordsworth.*

This Section divides itself into two parts:

PART I — vs. 3–8

"THE RIGHT USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS." — *Int. Crit. Com.*
"MINISTRY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS." — *New Century Bible.*
"CONDUCT IN THE CHURCH." — *Westminster New Testament.*

I. AVOID SELF-CONCEIT, vs. 3–5. The fact that three verses are used in discussing this danger, while each of the other qualities occupies only a part of a verse, shows how important it is to the welfare of the Church. Conceit is "entertaining an

3. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office;

5. So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith;

7. Or ministry, *let us wait* on *our* ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching;

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exaggerated opinion of one's own abilities, wisdom, or the like" (*Century Dic.*). This is a real danger even in Church affairs, especially in certain kinds of minds, both to themselves and the Church. Hence Paul urges **every man that is among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.** "The fact is, neither God nor man have any use for a conceited person, and when minister, singer or worker so obtrude themselves as to call attention to themselves rather than to the thing they are seeking to do, they fail utterly," and they also may make trouble for others.

On the other hand it is of equal importance, that every one **think soberly according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith** (Am. R.). "Whatever a man has God's grace bestows, his faith receives."

There are more persons who do not recognize the abilities God has given them, than persons who think too much of their ability. They have not the faith to see the small beginning of ability, and to use it, cultivate it, see it grow into real power. No one ought to sing "O, to be nothing." Thinking too little of one's ability leads men not to try to do what they can, and encourages neglect of duties and opportunities. In this sense it was that a missionary once said to me that most people think too little of themselves. We should have a true estimate of our abilities, be they great or small. "Consciousness of power is not wrong if one has the power."

4. The Church is a social organism with **many members in one body.** There is a great variety of duties, for all **have not the same office**, duty, gifts, forms of service. Hence each one can look up to the others, and rejoice in their superiority in certain lines; as a man and his wife have each points of superiority, and so each can look up to the other with admiration and love.

The Value of this Variety in Unity. (1) It gives free play to all that is in each individual. It is the Gospel of freedom. (2) It has a large modifying influence, one part on the other. It (3) enables the Church to do the great variety of work required for the coming of Christ's kingdom. (4) It meets the needs of every kind of person. (5) It finds a use for every kind of Christian. Even odd, crooked, peculiar people have a place and use if they can only find it.

II. PROPHECY, v. 6, "does not mean necessarily the power of foretelling the future, but that of revealing spiritual truth." — *W. Douglas Mackenzie.* "It signifies speaking as a messenger of God communications received from him and under the inspiration of his indwelling spirit. He, then, who teaches spiritual truth must teach it according to the measure of his own spiritual experience of the truth"; that is, **according to the proportion of faith**, a living experience of the presence of God, and of a long deep knowledge of the things that make it possible for God to reveal his truth to us. As the Psalmist said, "My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: **then spake I with my tongue.**" Ps. 39 : 3.

III. OR MINISTRY (v. 7), **let us wait on** (Am. R., "give ourselves to") **our ministering.** The business side of the Church, the collection of money for all its purposes, the distribution of gifts for the poor. Many a church fails of doing its best because it does not select for the management of its business affairs the best persons, trained business men and women, who will attend to the business.

IV. OR HE THAT TEACHETH. The true pastor is a combination of prophet, pastor and teacher, and he gives his mind and body, heart and soul to his work. But the emphasis here for the Church is on the Sunday school teacher. It is his duty to learn his business, to prepare himself for his work in the many ways possible to him. And the privilege of doing this is one of the greatest blessings that can come to

8. Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.

any man or woman. It builds up manhood and womanhood more perfectly than almost any other Christian work.

V. HE THAT EXHORTETH (v. 8), one who speaks words of encouragement. The word is allied to the word "Comforter" in John, one who comforts by making strong. "Barnabas is said to have been a man distinguished for this power" (Acts 4 : 36). To "comfort" thus adds a great power to those whose special work is to teach or preach.

VI. HE THAT GIVETH. **Let him do it with simplicity**, with unmixed motives, without ostentation, with no other thought than pure love; give in such a wise spirit that the receiver is uplifted, and encouraged, and not humiliated by receiving. To be able to give as God gives is a wonderful gift in itself. For **simplicity**, Am. R. reads, "liberality."

VII. HE THAT RULETH, who is appointed or chosen to take charge of the various departments of church work. Only those who will be diligent should be chosen. And it is an evil day when those who are appointed to places of authority, fail in diligence.

VIII. HE THAT SHOWETH MERCY, "does acts of kindness distinct from and in addition to, giving alms. To visit the widows and the fatherless, to bind up the broken hearted, to visit the sick and the prisoners, — these are all forms of showing mercy, recognized in the early Christian Church." **With cheerfulness**, Gr. *hilarity*, with joy for the privilege.

"The quality of mercy is not strained, but droppeth as the gentle dew from heaven." "There is no more beautiful characteristic of mercifulness than its cheerfulness or gladness." All who are continually working in the lines of mercy need to take the greatest care to avoid everything that is perfunctory.

"The fundamental thought in all these exhortations (vs. 6–8) is that every man is to give himself wholly to the work for which he is fitted, or to which by the providence of God he has been allotted, not seeking ambitiously for some other place, or some other service." — *Abbott.*

PART II — Vs. 9–21.

MAXIMS TO GUIDE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. — *Int. Crit. Com.*

THE LAW OF LOVE IN ITS MANIFOLD APPLICATIONS. — *New Century Bible.*

CONDUCT TOWARDS ALL MEN. — *Westminster New Testament.*

"If the state of justification produces holiness with a sort of moral necessity," as a rosebush bears roses or a peach tree peaches, then what is the need of so many exhortations? They are needed just as the rose bush needs culture, enriching, and training, in order to bear the best roses. The renewed soul needs guidance, encouragement, instruction.

I. LOVE, vs. 9. **Let love be without dissimulation**, Am. R., "hypocrisy." Love to God and man must be sincere, not a mere form, not an outward appearance, but that love described in 1 Cor. 13, — the greatest thing in the world.

From Calmet.

Ancient Actors Wearing Masks.

A hypocrite is one who wears a mask, like the ancient actors, and acts out characters entirely different from his own. Hence there immediately follows, **Abhor that which is evil**, for what is more evil than hypocrisy as a substitute for love. Hate it with all your soul. All sin is mean as well as wicked. It was Christ, the very fountain and example of love, who denounced

the hypocrisies of the Pharisee. **Cleave to that which is good.** The Greek word for "cleave" means to glue, or cement. Be glued, be cemented, to whatever is good, so that nothing can separate you from it, from Love the supreme good.

II. IN HONOR PREFERRING ONE ANOTHER, v. 10. Be so loving to one another, with such **brotherly love**, that you can stand this high test of love, that you can **in honor prefer one another.** One of the first lessons I learned as a pastor was that if I wished to succeed in any cause I had at heart, I must do the work quietly, and let others carry the flag and march at the head of the procession.

III. EARNESTNESS IN THE LORD'S SERVICE, v. 11. **Not slothful in business.** Am. R., "In diligence not slothful." Whatever work you have to do, including the main business of your life, and "whatsoever thy hands find to do, DO IT WITH THY MIGHT."

C. E. are the initial letters of Christian Endeavor in all the more than 30 languages spoken by members of the society, except the French, where the initials are *C. A.*, — Christian Activity. In Chinese the words mean "Drum-and-Rouse-Up" Society.

Fervent (boiling) **in spirit.** The reverse of the previous exhortation, both of which apply to **serving the Lord** in whatever you do, in play, in work, in religion. The whole life is transformed by doing all things for him. It ennobles the lowliest duties, and makes it possible for the most ordinary life to be lived in the spirit of heaven.

IV. REJOICING IN HOPE, v. 12. The Christian is so glorious with "joy unspeakable and full of glory," that he triumphs over the trials and difficulties in the way. "The eagle that soars into the heavens has no anxiety as to how he can cross the rivers that obstruct the way on earth."

V. PATIENT IN TRIBULATION. "This word, tribulation, both the English and the Latin equivalent of the Greek, is derived from the Latin '*tribulum*,' which was the threshing instrument or roller whereby the Roman husbandman separated the corn from the husks; and '*tribulatio*' in its primary significance was the act of this separation. But sorrow, distress, and adversity, are the appointed means for the separating in men of their chaff from their wheat." — *Trench.*

Often numberless small annoyances long continued are greater tribulations than heavy sorrows. A whole army has been defeated by wasps, — see Joshua 24 : 12. It was the legions of mosquitoes that defeated the first attempts to build the Panama Canal. Tribulations are the *School of Patience*, and it is a laboratory course, and not a lecture course.

VI. THE SCHOOL OF PRAYER. **Continuing instant** (Am. R., "steadfastly"). Urgent, pressing, persevering **in prayer**, as the means of communication with God, the source of all spiritual supply. The Christian must live in an atmosphere of prayer, if he would possess and cherish all these virtues.

VII. GIVEN TO HOSPITALITY, v. 13. In this verse are given two forms of ministering to others. **Distributing to the necessity of saints**, sharing with them the good things God has given us. **Given to hospitality.** Literally "pursuing hospitality," the same word in the Greek as "persecute" in the next verse; going after it, seeking earnestly the opportunities for it. "He does not say doing it, but given to it, so as to instruct us not to wait for those that shall ask it, and see when they will come to us, but to run to them, and be given to finding them." — *Chrysostom.* "For thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Heb. 13 : 2.

"Dig channels for the streams of Love
Where they may broadly run;
And Love has overflowing streams
To fill them every one.

"But if at any time thou cease
Such channels to provide,
The very springs of Love for thee
Will soon be parched and dried.

"For we must share, if we would keep,
That good thing from above;
Ceasing to give, we cease to have,
Such is the law of Love." — *Arbp. Trench.*

VIII. THE RIGHT TREATMENT OF THOSE WHO PERSECUTE US, v. 14. This is a quotation from the Sermon on the Mount. Paul well knew what he was advising, for he had had many an opportunity of practising his own precept. The difference between persecutors and the enemies referred to in verses 19, 20 is that persecutors are opposed to the cause, and enemies have personal hatred. Christ's blessing is bestowed upon this duty, the suffering for His Cause, so that He bids the persecuted to **rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven.** "Do you know what the moon did," asked Mr. Moody in one of his sermons, "when the dog barked at it? Kept shining right on."

IX. SYMPATHY WITH OTHERS, v. 15. **Rejoice . . . weep.** Sympathize with others both in joy and in sorrow. Sympathy, "feeling with" another whether

it be in joy or sorrow, is of great value in helping others. The poor and suffering need sympathy even more than gifts of help, but they need the help also to prove the sincerity of the sympathy. When Father Taylor, the Seaman's friend in Boston, was on his dying bed, a friend whispered, " You will soon be with the blessed angels." He spoke out quickly, " I don't want angels, I want folks."

X. HUMILITY, v. 16. **Be of the same mind**, in perfect sympathy of feeling. Do not set yourself up as better than others, of a superior class, looking down upon others. No matter how rich, or learned, or exalted in station, or talented, or honored, one may be, there is in the Christian religion a basis on which all may stand as equals, in the same love and faith and experience. This prevents class distinctions in the church, as between rich and poor, learned and unlearned, master and servant. If all are filled with the spirit of Christ, all can come together on that basis.

An excellent illustration is found in Prof. Henry Van Dyke's *The Mansion.*

" *Condescend* " does not express the Greek word. It is rather, " Be borne away " from the high things along with things that are humble.

XI. LIVING PEACEABLY WITH ALL MEN, vs. 17, 18. In order to do this there must be no retaliation, **Render to no man evil for evil.** See that your conduct is **honorable** (A. V., " honest ") **in the sight of all men. If it be *possible*, as much as *in you lieth*, be at peace with all men** (Am. R.). The emphasis lies on **possible** and **you.** " Not merely live peaceably. To *be* at peace signifies the disposition of the mind. The qualifications are important; it is not always possible to be at peace with others ; ' first pure, then peaceable ' (Jas. 3 : 17), is the universal law of Christian character and conduct." You may not always be able to live peaceably with some people, some enemies. But you must always be ready for peace, to do more than your share of reconciliation.

XII. OVERCOMING EVIL WITH GOOD, vs. 19–21. **Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves.** Many will hate you and wrong you for Christ's sake. But you are not to return evil for their evil. Because (1) it will merely increase the evil in the man, exciting his passions and inflaming his hatred. It will do him evil instead of good, and your business is to save and help him. (2) It is evil in you to do vengeance; it strengthens the worst side of your own nature, which you ought to overcome. It adds another wrong to his wrong, and increases the evil instead of overcoming it. **But rather give place unto wrath.** Stand one side, let him rage if he will without your punishing or fighting him. Your own non-resistance may calm him into a better mood. Like kindles like as fire kindles fire. Am. R. reads " Give place unto the wrath of God," " to leave room for it, not to take God's proper work out of his hands." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* Moreover while you are smarting under the wrong done to you, you are not in a proper state of mind to punish him. Therefore Paul refers the wronged one to Deut. 32 : 35. **Vengeance** (not revenge or vindictiveness, but " the full meting out of justice to all parties ") **is mine ; I will repay, saith the Lord.** He will treat all with his wisdom and love the most transforming power in the universe. Therefore he bids you to act in the same loving way. **Therefore if thine enemy hunger,** etc. A quotation from Proverbs 25 : 21, 22. The " heaping coals of fire on the head " of enemies is not the *object*, but only the *result*, of returning good for evil. He that returns good for evil for the purpose of " burning " his enemy, *if burning here means inflicting pain*, does not really give good for evil, but evil for evil, and there will be no good result. **The fire** burns, but also melts and softens ; it is the purifier and refiner of the character ; and is such action as will make the enemy ashamed, awaken his conscience, — that " torture of the mind," — and lead to bitter repentance. The only real victory is

BE NOT OVERCOME BY EVIL, BUT OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD.

"Learn from yon Orient shell to love thy foe
And strew with pearls the hand that brings thee woe;
Free, like yon rock, from base, vindictive pride,
Emblaze with gems the wrist that rends thy side."

LESSON X. — December 3.

JESUS CHRIST, THE FIRST AND THE LAST. — Rev. 1.

PRINT vs. 1-8, 17-20. COMMIT vs. 4-6.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore.* — REV. 1 : 17, 18.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

There are so many difficulties, and such a variety of interpretations, and such peculiar figurative language, — that many seldom read the book of Revelation, and would dread to have to teach it to a class of young people.

But the movement as a whole is so wonderful, so comforting, so full of inspiration, so picturesque, that the book can be made very interesting even to boys and girls. An enlarged copy of the chart given in this lesson, hung upon the wall, will be a special aid.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 4–6 ; Isa. 9 : 6, 7.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The book of Revelation.
The condition of Christians at the time it was written.
Meaning of "Apocalypse" as applied to this book.
The purpose of the book.
Why was it written in symbolic imagery?
Why is it especially appropriate as the last book of the Bible?
The symbolic picture of the Risen Christ.
How is it applicable to our daily need of a Saviour?

THE PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : Description of the Ever-living Christ.

I. THE BOOK OF REVELATION.
II. ST. JOHN COMMISSIONED TO WRITE A MESSAGE TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA, vs. 1–8.
III. VISION OF THE GLORIFIED JESUS, OUR MESSIAH KING, UNSEEN, BUT LIVING, vs. 9–20.

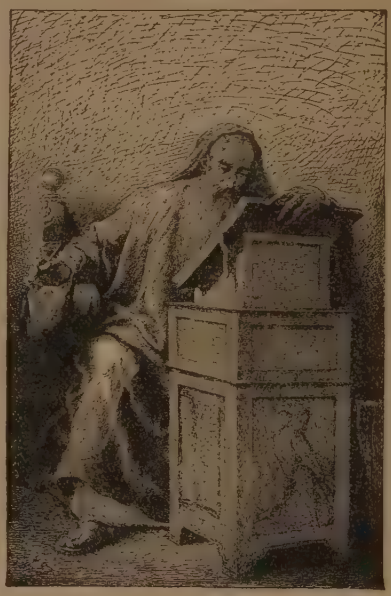
THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — A few years ago many scholars placed the date of writing in the reign of Nero, A.D. 60–68. But at present modern scholars date the book in the reign of Domitian (A.D. 81–96), when there was another bitter persecution of Christians; probably in the latter part of his reign.

Author. — St. John the Apostle.

Place of Writing. — The island of Patmos in the Ægean Sea, not far from Ephesus.

There is a great variety of opinions on the questions of date and authorship.



The Apostle John. Bida.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

There are a multitude of books on Revelation, of many varieties and degrees of value. We can notice only a few that will best aid the Sunday school teachers. One of the best is by Prof. William Milligan of Aberdeen, The Book of Revelation in *The Expositor's Bible*. The vol. on Revelation in the *Int. Crit. Commentaries* is not yet out. *The*

Expositor's Gk. Test., vol. 5 (Doran, $5). *Studies in the Apocalypse*, by Canon R. H. Charles (Scribners). *The New Century Bible.* Dr. Warren's *Book of Revelation. Book of Revelation* in *The Practical Com.*, by C. Anderson Scott. Phillips Brooks has a sermon on this chapter in one of his volumes of sermons, that for 1878.

PICTURES.

St. John the Evangelist, Dolci,* Correggio, Domenichino,* Gerini, Pinturicchio, Hans Memling; *St. John and St. Peter*, Albrecht Dürer;* *St. John in Patmos*, Giotto. *Vision of St. John*, Dolci.* *St. John Writing the Revelation*, Murillo.

I. **GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION.** In order to understand the three lessons in Revelation which have been selected in this course it will be necessary to give a brief survey of the nature and method of this peculiar but wonderful book.

First. Revelation, the translation of the Greek *Apocalypse*, signifies the unveiling of something hidden or unseen, things invisible to our bodily eyes. "It includes, with the thing shown or seen, its interpretation."

Therefore the book of Revelation is the unveiling of the unseen spiritual world, in order to give assurance and hope and faith to those who were being persecuted and martyred, by means of a vision of the souls of the martyrs triumphant and living in heaven; and of the everliving Christ their Lord and King.

Second. This glimpse into the unseen was given in the best possible form, in which the unseen reality was pictured before them by visions and symbols, and emblems and pictures, far more vivid and real than any mere description could furnish. Apocalyptic literature was familiar. "Of the 404 verses which compose the Apocalypse, 278 have ideas, words, and phrases found in the Old Testament. Of these, 46 are from Isaiah, 31 from Daniel, 29 from Ezekiel, 27 from the Psalms, and a lesser number from Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, Joel, Zechariah." — *Compiled by Prof. H. B. Swete.* This symbolic language was used by St. John, just as we use any secular language that best expresses the truths we would make known.

Note that frequently the symbols cannot be put into picture forms, any more than we could make a picture of Shakespeare's "Take arms against a sea of troubles," but each metaphor has a real meaning, and these meanings make good sense.

Third. Revelation was a message to the Christians in the reign of the Emperor Domitian, under whom there was a terrible persecution and martyrdom, when not to worship the emperor was regarded as treason. They "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." The vision of the unseen revealed the martyrs alive in the heavenly world, singing songs of triumph, "in joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Fourth. The Message was to the people of that time, but this did not prevent them from seeing far beyond, down the ages to the time of the completion of Christ's work on earth and the coming of the kingdom of heaven; just as we to-day in the midst of the conflict, receive comfort and the assurance of faith and hope in the final triumph of Christianity, and the coming of God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Fifth. The Book of Revelation is the only fitting close of the Bible as a whole. Nothing more perfect is conceivable or known in the literature of the world. Nothing could give such faith and hope and courage to us who after so many centuries are still in the midst of the conflict between good and evil; for the vision of the end of evil, and the triumph of the Gospel of Jesus can be seen from the Delectable Mountains, and we are drawing nearer to the answer to our Lord's prayer.

The accompanying chart of the Book of Revelation will help us to see the progress of the kingdom of heaven on the earth, and the meaning of the book for us, not in its details but in the general movement.

Note 1, as we read the book, that the point of view continually changes from the familiar scenes on earth to their counterpart in heaven. We read of Christ on earth, and then see him in glory. We see the martyrs on earth, and directly we see them alive and triumphant in the to us unseen world. We see the Christians amid wars and famines, and persecutions, and then we look up and hear their songs of praise. We do not understand the earthly conditions till we see the heavenly.

2. We see more clearly the progress of this world, — Christ our everliving king, a

CHART OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION.

The unseen world unveiled.	*The everliving Jesus in his Resurrection Glory.*	*Victors crowned. Morning star; White Raiment. New name. Enthroned.*	*God on his throne. The Lion of Judah. The Lamb that was slain. Men, Angels, Creation join in the Songs of Redeeming Love.*	*Countless numbers of the Redeemed from Great Tribulations. Christianity a success.*	*The witness restored to life. New progress of the Gospel. Songs of Triumph.*	*The Faithful saints sing songs of Victory. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.*	*Christ Crucified, is overcoming the evil powers. Good is prevailing over Evil.*	*Saints reigning with Christ, now the King of kings. The victory of Good over Evil.*	
Chap.	I	II, III	IV, V, VI	VII, VIII, IX	XI	XII, XIII, XIV	XVI, XVII	XIX, XX	XXI, XXII
The scenes on earth well-known	Jesus in his Earthly life as in the Gospels.	The Christian churches on earth; persecuted, imperfect, but striving upward.	The Seals. Conquest. War. Famine. Death. Persecution. Earthquake.	The Trumpets. Hail. Fire. Wormwood. Darkness. Locusts. Scorpions. Plagues.	The two Witnesses of the Gospel slain. War from the Bottomless Pit.	Persecutions. The Dragon. The Wild Beast. (civil power) The Wild Beast. (False Prophet) No. 666 — Rome. But the Gospel is Preached.	The 7 Bowls of Divine wrath against Evil. 1. Pestilence. 2. Blood in the Sea. 3. Blood on the rivers. 4. Burning. 5. Darkness. 6. Drought. 7. Convulsions. To make men afraid to do wrong.	The judgment Day. The Powers of Good have overcome the Powers of Evil.	the new Earth are one. The Celestial City God's kingdom has come.

picture of the churches, the long, tedious conflict between good and evil, and the final consummation in the answer to our Lord's prayer.

3. We see the certainty of the final victory. We are not discouraged, for we know the result.

4. We see that we are drawing nearer and nearer to the coming of the kingdom.

THIRTY-SEVEN MILLIONS LEFT. The publisher of a recent story, *The Last Christian*, in the foreword on the slip-cover asks this question :

"'Why are churches falling into decay and congregations dwindling every year?' Before asking such a question it would have been well to have ascertained whether it postulated a fact. *The World Almanac* for 1914 gives the total of church membership for 1912 in the United States as 36,668,165 with a footnote to the effect that 'the larger of the Protestant bodies may claim twice the number of their communicants as adherents.'

THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified *it* by his angel unto his servant John:

2. Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3. Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time *is* at hand.

4. JOHN to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

"In the Sunday schools, a comparatively new movement, are twenty-six million children; the Christian Endeavor, still newer, has a membership of nearly four million. Add to this the Y. M. C. A., with 597,857 members in America; the Y. W. C. A.; the Epworth League; the Young People's Union of the Baptist and of other churches, and it will be plain to an unprejudiced mind that congregations are *not* dwindling nor churches decaying. In 1913 over 2000 new churches were built [or as another puts it — one church every hour of an 8-hour working day]. The percentage of increase in Christian churches is greater than that of the population." — *The Independent.*

The amount given for the benefit of the people, the number of societies of all kinds, the many ways of service for others never was so great as to-day.

II. **ST. JOHN COMMISSIONED TO WRITE A MESSAGE TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA**, vs. 1–8. **The Revelation of** (by) **Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him**, God being the original source. **Which must shortly come to pass.**

Isle of Patmos, where John wrote the Book of Revelation.

The message came soon, but it was not completely fulfilled immediately; as the Book itself shows. The Message was an Era, not a single event, just as we say the year 1916 came on January 1, or Spring will come on March 21. The era comes then, but not all the contents of the era.

His servant John. The Apostle John.

2. Who bare record. "Witness" (Am. R.).

4. John to the seven churches which are in Asia, the province of Asia (in the western part of Asia Minor) of which Ephesus on the Ægean Sea was the capital. These churches are named in verse 11.

Grace, favor, loving kindness a free gift of all that brings delight, the ideal of perfect blessing.

From him which (Am. R. "Who") "**is,**" **and . . . was, and . . . is to come** —

5. And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful Witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

6. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

The Eternal God, — **and from the seven Spirits**, the Holy Spirit, "indicating unity through diversity." "The sevenfold Spirit, which indeed is simple in nature, sevenfold in grace." — *Cited by Trench.*

5. **And from Jesus Christ.** These three are the Holy Trinity. **Jesus Christ the faithful Witness**, who reported the truth about God and his love, about heaven, and salvation, and duty, and all that mankind need to know. **The first begotten** (Am. R., "First born") **of the dead.** The first one raised from the dead; who so rose that there was no more death for them; the proof of our resurrection. **And the Prince** (Am. R., "ruler") **of the Kings of the earth.** Who will conquer the whole world for the kingdom of heaven.

"*The threefold title*, — First-born from the dead, the Witness, the Prince, — answers to the threefold purpose of the Apocalypse, which is at once a Divine Testimony, a Revelation of the Risen Lord, and a Forecast of the issues of history." — *Professor Swete.*

The threefold work done for us. **Loved** (Am. R., "loveth") **us** (John 3 : 16). **Washed us from our sins in his own blood**, by his death on the cross. Am. R. reads "loosed us from our sins by his blood." **Made us kings and priests** (Am. R., "To be a kingdom," *i.e.* an organized society, "and to be priests unto his God"), specially holy in communion with God, consecrated to minister to others in spiritual service, to pray for others, and to sacrifice themselves for the good of others.

7. **Behold he cometh with clouds**, as in Matt. 24 : 30. All **shall see him**, even those who crucified him, **and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him** (Am. R.).

8. **I am Alpha and Omega**, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, hence, **the beginning and the ending**, including all between. (Am. R. omits these last words.) **Saith the Lord** (Am. R., "Lord God"), **the Almighty which is . . . was . . . and is to come.**

III. **THE VISION OF THE GLORIFIED JESUS, THE MESSIAH KING, UNSEEN BUT REAL**, vs. 9–20. John was the **brother and companion** of his fellow Christians in the province of Asia, who were suffering a bitter persecution, **in the kingdom**, Christ's kingdom on earth, **and patience**, the long waiting in patient endurance for deliverance. John had been banished to **the isle that is called Patmos**, because he was faithful in teaching the **Word of God**, and had borne **testimony** concerning **Jesus Christ** the Saviour of the World.

Patmos, the modern Patino — "is a small rocky island, about ten miles long by six wide, lying off the S.W. coast of Asia Minor. According to an ancient tradition offenders of rank were banished thither to work in the mines or marble quarries." — *New Century Bible.* Pliny says, "the convicts found nothing but bare rocks, and had to pass a life of hardship and misery."

10. **I was in the Spirit.** "In a state of trance." Compare Acts 10 : 10; 2 Cor. 12 : 2, 4. "Connection with surrounding objects through the senses is suspended, and a connection with the invisible world takes place." — *Ebrard.* "Ecstasy or spiritual rapture was the supreme characteristic of prophets." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* **On the Lord's day.** The day made sacred to all Christians for all time by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It was the day of light, of salvation, of proof of immortal life, of the new and everlasting existence of Jesus as the Messiah. It was fitting that the vision of the Lord should be sent on the Lord's Day; and by its devotional influences, the apostle was best fitted to receive them. **And heard behind me.** From one not seen. This was his first intimation of the presence of Christ. **A great voice, as of a trumpet.** As loud and distinct and far-reaching as a trumpet making a proclamation.

11. **I am Alpha and Omega** as in ver. 8 (Am. R. omits this phrase). **What thou seest, write in a book,** a parchment roll. **Send it unto the seven churches** which we consider in our next lesson. They needed the message.

The Symbolic Vision of the Churches. 12. **I turned to see the voice . . . and . . . I saw seven golden candlesticks,** lampstands, each one with a separate lamp, or the candlesticks may be each like the seven branched candlesticks of the Temple. Made of gold tried in the fire, beautiful, pure, precious. In verse 20 we are told that **the seven candlesticks . . . are the seven churches,** each church composed of many members, or several departments, each sending forth various kinds of light in various directions, the light of Christ, that guides, beautifies, comforts, gives life and health. It is the province of the Church to give light, as a lighthouse, sending far and wide the light of truth, the light of good works, of all the fruits of the spirit. The light is kindled by the Holy Spirit. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5: 16.)

From the Arch of Titus, Rome.
Golden Candlestick.

The Vision of the Glorified Jesus. In studying this vision let us recall the fact, emphasized by Professor Moulton, that the figurative expressions are *symbols,* and not images. They cannot be presented in pictorial form. Each particular symbol is an echo from the Old Testament, and is, as it were, the text for the presentation of one characteristic, and it is the characteristic, not the symbol, that forms the picture. We have a fine instance in *The Song of Solomon* where his beloved is described thus :

> "Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armory;
> Thine eyes are as the pools in Heshbon which looketh toward Damascus;
> Thy nose is like the tower of Lebanon;
> Thy hair is like a flock of goats."

No one could make a picture of the Beloved from this description, but the symbols present her in her attractive beauty.

13. **In the midst of the seven candlesticks.** Actually present among the churches, not in a far distant place. See Matt. 18 : 20. **One like unto the Son of man.** Am. R., "a son of man." Like a human being, as Jesus was. "Who is He? He is a Being of surpassing glory, and yet He has 'a human air,' He is 'one like unto a son of man,' aye, like unto *the* Son of Man. He is transfigured in celestial light, as in that great day on the Mount ; but the heart which throbs beneath that breast, the spirit which flames from out those eyes, the soul which utters itself in that voice, is the same as in the happy days of long ago. It is the same Jesus." — *J. Munro Gibson.* **Clothed with a garment down to the foot,** "An Oriental mark of dignity, denoting high rank or office, such as that of Parthian kings." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* "The long loose robe worn by the high priest, 'for glory and beauty,' belonging to royalty as well as priesthood. See Dan. 10 : 5." — *Arbp. Tait.* **A golden girdle.** Worn by priests and kings, and a symbol of power, strength, and free activity (Isa. 11 : 5 ; Eph. 6 : 14).

14. **His head and his hairs were white like wool . . . as snow.** Like the Ancient of days in Dan. 7 : 9 ; 10 : 6. This was a symbol of eternal existence, "the mighty centre of two eternities" ; the wisdom of age and the purity and splendor of eternal youth. **His eyes were as a flame of fire.** A symbol of the penetrating glance that looks into the very souls of men, into the deepest mystery and the most distant future. Nothing can escape these "eyes of fire," which "do not merely *look through* the hypocrite and the sinner, but *consume* him, him and his sins together, unless, indeed, he will suffer them to *consume his sins,* that so *he* may live." — *F. S. Stone, D.D.* "So Homer of Agamemnon in a rage : 'His eyes were like shining fire' (*Iliad* 1 : 104)." — *Vincent.*

15. **His feet like unto fine** (Am. R., burnished) **brass.** Polished, and in that white heat where the radiance is greatly increased, and its dazzling brightness is

17. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18. *I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

19. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

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almost insupportable. "These lightning figures represent the feet as moving with inconceivable swiftness." — *Fuller.* They indicate "the purity and fervor of the Lord's activity among his people." — *Professor Riddle.* They symbolize the Lord's omnipresence; he is able, against all obstacles, to go wherever he is needed, to overcome all enemies, and bring swift deliverance to his own people. **His voice as the sound of many waters.** Resounding, powerful, musical, and one that can be heard afar. His voice deep, grand, majestic, as the roar of the sea. "It was the voice that woke the dead at the gates of Nain, or brought back Lazarus from his tomb." — *Arbp. Tait.*

It was the symbol of God's voice through the Spirit, through providence, through conscience, through his word, — a voice that must be obeyed, even when "he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked" (Isa. 11 : 4). It is a voice manifold as many waters, speaking in many ways. It is far-reaching, heard round the world. It is pleasant and musical to those who desire to obey, but terrible to the obstinately wicked, as the sound of the breakers on a lee shore to a tempest-tossed vessel.

16. **In his right hand seven stars.** The emblem of "the angels of the churches" (v. 20), the pastors or leaders of the churches, or possibly the guardian angels. "Angel" means both "messengers" and "angels" who are God's messengers. These "angels" are the representatives of the churches. It is to these that the messages to the churches are sent. They are called stars, because of their pre-eminent position, as we often use the word; because they shine in the spiritual heavens brighter than the lamplight of the churches, but shedding the same light over the darkness.

They are held in his *right hand* "to signify that the pastors of his churches are protected, upheld, and controlled by his wisdom and power, and are very dear to him, as elsewhere they are called 'the signet on his right hand'" (See Jer. 22 : 24). — *MacIlvaine.*

Out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. The symbol of the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit (Heb. 4 : 12). It is the weapon by which sin is to be vanquished, and the world is to be overcome, so that its people shall be transformed into citizens of the kingdom of God. **And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.** Like the glory seen in the Transfiguration, and by Paul near Damascus. It was the symbol of the glorious nature of our Saviour-King, eclipsing all other beings as the sun eclipses the stars; the source of light, beauty, comfort, and power; the victor over the darkness of ignorance and sin, and over the prince of the power of darkness.

The Overwhelming Effect on John. 17. **I fell at his feet as dead.** Overcome by the glory of His presence. "The brighter discoveries we have of Christ, the more shall we be humbled in the dust before him." — *C. Simeon.* **He laid his right hand upon me.** In gentle, brotherly touch, to arouse him to consciousness. **Fear not; I am the first and the last.** The same divine Jesus whom he had known on earth, the one he had seen crucified and risen from the dead.

18. **He that liveth,** Am. R., "and the Living One," the source and author of life, who **was dead,** as John had seen, but now **alive for evermore. And** (I) **have the keys of hell.** Hades, the place of the dead. **And of death.** He has power over these to say who shall go in and who shall be kept out. He has the power to preserve from death, and to raise from the dead into immortal life. Compare the raising of Lazarus.

19. **Write the things which thou hast seen.** The vision of Jesus as he is, the messages to the churches, the visions that follow.

20. **The mystery.** The hidden sense conveyed by the symbols. These have already been considered.

The Revelation to Them and to Us. The glorious Saviour here revealed is the one

20. The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

comfort and hope of the church all through the ages. In the greatest darkness of persecution, when all things good seem to be going to ruin, here is our star of hope. Amid the worldliness and temptations of the present day, each attribute revealed in the above description brings help and courage and victory. The greater the Christ of the church the greater its power for salvation. The more the church recognizes this being as their Saviour, the greater will be its victories.

" Yes, this Son of man, with eyes like a flame of fire, and a voice like the sound of many waters, and His face like the sun shining in his strength, is the very same at heart — as tender, as gentle, as compassionate — as in the old days when, with eyes like ours, and a voice like ours, and a face like ours, He went in and out among the people, and ate with publicans and sinners, and poured out His soul unto death upon the cruel cross." — *J. Munro Gibson.*

Studying this for several days, has helped me to realize the presence of Jesus, as my leader and Saviour and King. He is not a mere vision, but a living reality unveiled from the unseen. He is a living Fact, One I can love as I would an absent friend, with whom I am in constant communication, and as real.

LESSON XI. — December 10.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH. — Revelation 2:1-17.

COMMIT vs. 7.

GOLDEN TEXT. — ***Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.*** — REV. 2:10.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

More than in most lessons the map is necessary, with the names of the places distinctly marked. Such a map is given in the Introductory pages of this book.

There are interesting stories of each of the seven cities and the churches belonging to them.

These may be told by the teacher, or, better yet, by the different members of the class, with corrections or additions by the other members, and the teacher.

LEARN BY HEART.

The seven rewards for those who overcome. 2:7; 11; 17; 28; 3:5; 12; 21.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — This series of Letters was probably written between A.D. 90 and 96 in connection with the whole book of Revelation.

Author. — St. John the Apostle.

Places. — They were written in the Isle of Patmos to which St. John was banished, to the churches in the Province of Asia, the western Province of Asia Minor, on the Ægean Sea.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

Give to each scholar one of the seven cities for special study.

Or if there are more scholars each of the seven letters may be divided into two parts, one for the characteristics of the churches, the other the reward for overcoming.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Messages to the Seven Churches of Asia; and to all Churches of all Time.

I. EPHESUS: THE CHURCH OF WANING ENTHUSIASM, vs. 1–7.

II. SMYRNA: THE CHURCH WITH THE CROWN OF LIFE, vs. 8–11.

III. PERGAMUM: THE CHURCH IN A STRONGHOLD OF SATAN, vs. 12–17.

IV. GLIMPSES OF THE REMAINING FOUR CHURCHES.

THYATIRA. SARDIS
PHILADELPHIA. LAODICEA.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Sir William Ramsay's *Letters to the Seven Churches* ($3.00). *The Holy Land of Asia Minor*, describing the Seven Cities of the Book of Revelation. By Rev. Francis E. Clark, D.D. L.L.D., who has recently visited each of these cities (Scribners, $1.00, 1914). *The National Geographic Magazine* for *Nov.* and *Dec.*, 1908, and *Jan.*, 1909, each 25 cts., with many fine photographs in each (Washington, D.C.). *The Epistles to the Seven Churches*, E. H. Plumptre, D.D. (E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.)

Phillips Brooks has a sermon on "The Pillar in God's Temple," in *The Candle of the Lord and other sermons.*

In our last lesson we saw the unveiling of our Lord Jesus Christ as He now exists after His Resurrection and Ascension, but at the same time always with us as He promised.

To-day we consider the messages He sent to the Churches founded in His name by the Holy Spirit through His apostles and missionaries. We must remember that members of these churches were living, as a small community, in the midst of heathenism with all its moral degradation. Most of the fashionable and wealthy were against them. "It takes live fish to swim up stream." "The Lotus flower is clean although it grows from the Nile mud."

"Seven churches are named, though there must have been more in Asia; but 'seven' being the number of completeness stood for them all, and indeed for the entire church of Christ. The number seven carries with it moreover the thought of unity. The seven are viewed as one, just as the seven spirits before the throne (1:4) are not separate entities, but the one Spirit of God considered in the multiplicity and totality of His operation. But observe the kind of unity, a multiple unity. It was never intended that the New Testament Church should be one vast organization under a single outward administration. As the late Dean Plumptre puts it, the number seven indicates 'unity developed in diversity and yet remaining one.' We may be and may remain Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists, Friends: we may be many outwardly and yet one inwardly, one in spirit and in truth."—*J. Munro Gibson.*

Each of the seven churches was the centre of a group of churches.

Each of them was probably a postal centre. If you will look on the map you will see that they are connected together with roads which were doubtless postal routes.

Note as we study these churches, we will find great advantage in applying what is said about each one to the modern church of which we are members or attendants, and study what in each we should avoid, what we should strive to attain, and what blessing bestowed on each we may receive.

Illustration. Laura E. Richards has this clever fable that is applicable here:—

A man was complaining of his neighbors. "I never saw such a wretched set of people," he said, "as are in this village. They are mean, selfish, greedy of gain, and careless of the needs of others. Worst of all, they are for ever speaking evil of one another."

"Is it really so?" asked an angel who happened to be walking with him.

"It is indeed!" said the man. "Why, only look at this fellow coming towards us! I know his face, though I can not tell you his name. See his little sharp, cruel eyes, darting here and there like a ferret's, and the lines of covetousness about his mouth! The very droop of his shoulders is mean and cringing, and he slinks along instead of walking."

"It is very clever of you to see all this," said the angel, "but there is one thing which you do not perceive."

"What is that?" asked the man.

"Why, that it is a looking-glass we are approaching," said the angel.

I. **EPHESUS, THE CHURCH OF WANING ENTHUSIASM**, vs. 1-7. So Dr. F. E. Clark, who has recently visited its site, names it, and goes on to say, "I know of no passage in the Bible which is more important for the modern church to read and ponder than the message to the ancient church in Ephesus."

Place. Ephesus was situated originally at the head of a narrow bay extending into the country from the Ægean Sea. The river Cayster flowed into this bay. It was the capital of the province of Asia, said to have been the richest province of the Roman Empire. The great temple of Diana, of marvellous architecture, and containing statues and works of art by some of the greatest artists the world has known, was one of the seven wonders of the world. There still remain the ruins of its amphitheatre

UNTO the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

2. I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

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capable of seating 24,000 spectators (Rome's seated 87,000, Yale's Bowl seats 72,000, Harvard's Stadium 50,000). Paul had various experiences in Ephesus, for which see Les. VIII, 3d. Quar.

One thing more is of special interest for this lesson. The river Cayster flowing by Ephesus brought down a great mass of silt from the soft rich soil which gradually was filling up the bay, and leaving the city farther and farther from the sea, till now it is miles away from the sea shore. "At last this port became impossible, and the in-

Ruins of the Temple of Diana, Ephesus.

habitants who had moved away from the original site to keep near the sea, moved back toward the ancient site, where to-day the few inhabitants that still remain are found." — *F. E. Clark.*

The Sender of the Message is shown to be the same Everliving Son of God, because the description here of the Sender is found in the description in chapter 1. **He that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand** in ch. 1 : 16; and **Walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks**, in ch. 1 : 13.

The Good Characteristics of the Ephesian Church. Paul had founded the Church in Ephesus, A.D. 53–56, some 40 years before John wrote out the message in this chapter. He spent three years there, longer than in any other church, and he had grounded them in both faith and works.

2. **I know thy works**, for he had walked among them unseen, but not unknown, and **his eyes were like a flame of fire** (1 : 14), and nothing escaped them. "**Works** here = the general course and moral conduct of life, especially in its active and passive sides, as exertion and endurance."

Note that He noticed first the good things He saw in them. That is the eye of love.

And thy labor (Am. R., "toil"), "hard work, vigorous dealing with impostors, practical energy and enterprise; proceeding from religious principle." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* **And thy patience**, "steadfast endurance in bearing witness for Christ." Patience at the slowness of results, patience in the midst of hindrances, opposition, false accusations, without losing courage or temper. "Patience is both an active virtue, — a steady, untiring, watchful industry and faithfulness, — and a passive

3. And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

4. Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

6. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.

7. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

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virtue, gentle, serene, self-possessed, without yielding its ground, or repining." — *Century Dic.*

Lest this should be misunderstood, as yielding to wrong, the speaker goes on to praise the Ephesian Church because **thou canst not bear them which are evil**, and **hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not**, but by patient zeal thou **hast found them liars** (Am. R., "false"). One example is given in verse 6, where they are praised for not having the kind of patience which would keep them from hating **the deeds of the Nicolaitanes which I also hate.**

The Nicolaitans were a party or sect in the churches of Ephesus and Pergamon, who among other evils practised the teaching of Balaam who showed how the Moabites could conquer the Israelites by leading them into the immoralities of heathen worship (Num. 31 : 16; See vs. 14). They "confined ethical perfection to the spirit." They taught that "as the flesh has no part in the divine life, it may be regarded . . . as something morally indifferent. . . . The practical inference of sensual indulgence is obvious, the argument being that the lofty spirit cannot be soiled by such indulgence any more than the sun is polluted by shining on a dunghill." — *Exp. Gk. Test.* See Jude, verse 11; Numb. 31 : 16.

3. Fainted. Am. R., "grown weary."

The One Fault Found with the Ephesian Church — **Thou hast left thy first love**, v. 4. "No evil is more marked among the Christian churches of this day," said Horace Bushnell, 50 years ago, "than precisely the absence of this spirit of burning which the Ephesians lacked. There is plenty of liberality and effort, there is a genial tolerance and wide culture, and a high standard of morality, but there is little love and little fervour." Present times are better than they were 50 years ago; but still one great need of the churches is more Love, more devotion to Christ.

The Warning, v. 5. **Remember therefore from whence thou are fallen, and repent; and do the first works**, the proof that they have returned to their first love. For else **I will remove thy candlestick**, the lamp of the church organization with its light and glory, **out of his place except thou repent.** Plumptre thinks that not long after this there are traces of a marked change for the better, a revival of the old energy of life and love. "But to-day every memorial that there once was a church there has departed, and not one Christian family lives in the desolation . . . that Ephesus has become." — *F. E. Clark.*

The Glorious Promise, v. 7. "Listen," to what the **Spirit saith unto the Churches**, to all the churches, as well as Ephesus. There is one absolute, essential condition without which the Promise cannot be fulfilled, — **To him that overcometh** the evils, errors, failures pointed out to each. In the case of Ephesus that which must be overcome is the loss of their first love. **Will I give to eat of the Tree of Life . . . in the Paradise of God**, both in Eden, Gen. 2 : 8–17, if Adam and Eve had overcome temptation, and in Revelation 22 : 2, in the new Paradise of God for those who overcome. The tree gave and sustained life, it bore twelve kinds of fruit including the fruits of the Spirit of life (Gal. 5 : 22), **and yielded her fruit every month.** There was no lack of an abundant harvest of every virtue, and every thing that built up the soul. "To eat of the tree of life was to possess immortality."

Even the leaves **were for the healing of the nations** (Rev. 22 : 2), "the elevation of their standard of purity and holiness, of duty and of love." — *Plumptre.* The leaves are the builders of the trees on which the fruit grows. The trees are the material

8. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the First and the Last, which was dead, and is alive;

9. I know thy works, and tribulation and poverty, (but thou art rich,) and *I know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan.

10. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

11. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

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framework of the nation on which the lamp of the church stands. The leaves on the tree of life represent all the influences which build up a nation other than the distinctively religious, — a righteous government, honest and unselfish business, educational institutions, just laws, etc., etc., which are for the healing of the nations from every form of evil.

II. **SMYRNA. THE CHURCH WITH THE CROWN OF LIFE**, vs. 8–11. *The City* is 48 miles north of Ephesus by the modern railroad. It is situated on the bay of Smyrna, an inlet from the Ægean Sea on the east. "Next to Constantinople, it is the largest and most important city of the Turkish Empire. Its situation, too, is almost as fine as the peerless site of the city on the Bosphorus. Its harbor is so spacious 'that the navies of the world can ride at the waterfront of Smyrna.' It now has a population of 250,000. Here are the fine buildings of the International College of Smyrna, an American Christian College, manned by American teachers and built by American money." — *Condensed from Dr. F. E. Clark.*

The Sender of the Message. **These things saith "the First and the Last,"** identifying Him with the "Son of Man" (1:11), and the phrase **which** (Am. R., "who" referring to Christ) **was dead and is alive**, is appropriate to the history of the city. "A thousand years before Christ Smyrna was a great Grecian city, but it was destroyed, wiped off of the face of the earth, by the Lydian King Alyates about 600 years before Christ. It was dead, for during 400 years it ceased to exist as a Greek city. Strabo says emphatically that Smyrna was obliterated from the roll of cities for four centuries; but other authorities speak of Smyrna as a State existing during that period of annihilation. The words of the ancients literally are that Smyrna was dead and yet lived." — *Professor Ramsay.*

Characteristics of the Smyrna Church. "It is an interesting fact that Smyrna, the only city of the seven, except Philadelphia, whose Church receives from the Master unqualified praise, is also the only city of the Seven which is to-day great and prosperous." — *F. E. Clark.*

9. **I know thy works and tribulation and poverty (but thou art rich)** rich in good works, rich toward God, rich in all good qualities, rich with treasures in heaven.

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE AND MEASURE RICHES?

The opposition of bad men was very great.

10. **The devil**, who hates all good things, **shall cast some of you into prison. Ye shall have tribulation ten days**, representing a limited period which will come to an end.

Polycarp who later was the Bishop of Smyrna, and the disciple of St. John, received the fulfilment of the promise, "**Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.**" "Who does not cherish the beautiful saying of the aged Bishop, when in the stadium of Smyrna at two o'clock of a Saturday afternoon in the year A.D. 156, as the flames mounted around him and he was asked to save his life by renouncing Christ, he cried out: 'Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has done me no ill; how then can I blaspheme my King who hath saved me.'" — *F. E. Clark.* **A crown of life**, the symbol of victory over evil, "eternal life as a crown of victory."

11. **He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.** "The second death is the final condemnation which sinners undergo at the Judgment of God. The first death is, on the other hand, the natural one." — *Bousset.*

Illustration. William Williams, the founder of Williams College, Mass., was a member of the Continental Congress in 1776–7. Two members of the Council of Safety were quartered at his house. One evening the conversation turned on the

12. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

13. I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat *is:* and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

14. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

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gloomy outlook. "If we fail," said Williams, "I know what my fate will be. I have done much to prosecute the war; and one thing I have done which the British will never pardon — I have signed the Declaration of Independence; I shall be hung." "Well," said Mr. ——, "if we fail, I shall be exempt from the gallows, for my name is not attached to the Declaration." "Then, sir," said Williams, turning his kindling eye upon him, "you deserve to be hung for not doing your duty."

III. **PERGAMUM, THE CHURCH IN A STRONGHOLD OF SATAN**, vs. 12–17. *The city* was very ancient, and was once the most celebrated city of Asia. It had a library of 200,000 volumes, and was the seat of a university. It is 50 miles almost due north of Smyrna, and built on the sides of a high hill 1090 ft. above the level of the sea. The modern town lies at the foot of the hill, with 17,000 inhabitants. — *Nat. Geographical Magazine.* It was once the capital of the Province of Asia, that included all the Seven Churches.

About 30 B.C. a splendid temple was built here in honor of Rome and Augustus Cæsar. "To it was brought in after years many a Christian who was commanded to worship the statue of the Emperor, and burn incense before it. If he refused there probably awaited him martyrdom by burning at the stake. Or perhaps he would be transported to Rome, and there thrown to the wild beasts in the Colosseum." No wonder that Pergamum was called "Satan's Seat." — From Clark's *Holy Land of Asia Minor.*

The Symbol of the Sender of the Message, v. 12. **These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges.** "This was the symbol of absolute authority, invested with the power of life and death. To Pergamum this is entirely suitable. He that hath the absolute and universal authority speaks to the Church situated in the city where official authority dwells." — *Ramsay.* **Out of the mouth** of the Lord Christ as pictured in 1 : 16, **proceeded a sharp two-edged sword**, sharper, giving more effective commands, than any words of authority from a Roman emperor.

For What the Church at Pergamum was Praised, v. 13. **I know thy works.** No good thing the church does is hidden from Him; and He loves to emphasize and praise it. In judging the faithfulness of the Christians at Pergamum and the failures of some of them, He recognized that they were living **even where Satan's seat** (Am. R., "throne") **is.** "In these remarkable words is compressed a world of meaning. 'Satan' is a term here employed in a figurative sense to denote the power or influence that withstands the Church and all who belong to it . . . the official authority and power which stands in opposition to the church." — *Ramsay.* Against this wind and tide of evil, against the fiercest attacks of temptation, threatened by poverty, dangers, persecutions, hatred, torment, death, they stood so firm that the Lord could say to them, **Thou holdest fast my name, and thou hast not denied my name even in Satan's seat, nor even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful marytr** (Am. R., "the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one who was killed among you") **where Satan dwelleth.**

The Dangers that threatened the Church, vs. 14–16. **I have a few things against thee.** Not so many nor so strong as the good things praised.

(1) Some of their number accepted and practised the teachings of Balaam. Jude, verse 11, Numbers 31 : 16.

(2) These teachings **cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel.** Balaam deliberately showed Balak how to tempt the Israelites to sin against the Laws of God. He did this by persuading the Israelites to join in the idolatrous feasts and revels of the heathen, and the impurity of their worship.

15. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

16. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

17. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth *it*.

(3) Some of the members held to the teaching of the Nicolaitans, referred to under Ephesus.

The One Way of Salvation was for them to **repent.** The Lord otherwise would **fight against them with the sword of my mouth**, not with worldly weapons, but with the **word of God, living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of Soul and Spirit** . . . and quick to **discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.** (Heb. 4 : 12. See also v. 13.) "The Lord would raise up faithful and true prophets . . . who would wield that sword effectively, and slay the monstrous forms of error that were warring against the truth." — *Plumptre.*

The Reward to those who Overcome, v. 17. (1) **I will give to eat of the hidden manna.** Manna was food for the Israelites during their long journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. Its source was hidden, but it was found in the morning, and sustained the people, like daily bread. It was the symbol of spiritual food, which God gives to his people all along their way to heaven, unseen but never failing. It was the symbol of "the true bread from heaven," Jesus himself; like the loaves which multiplied in the hands of Jesus' disciples when they carried them to the multitudes.

(2) **And I will give him a white stone.** "It is as a matter of fact, all but universal, that white, in its brightness and purity, has been associated with joy and gladness, with victory and triumph. . . . When the vote of an assembly as to the guilt of an accused person was taken by ballot, white stones were the symbol of acquittal. It has been contended with at least much plausibility, that this is the significance of the 'White Stone' in the promise now before us." — *Plumptre*, who prefers the suggestion that the "white stone" was a ticket with the name of the guest written upon it, as an invitation to a temple feast; or that "in virtue of form or characters inscribed on it, he who possessed it could claim from the friend who gave it, at any distance of time, a frank and hearty welcome."

Compare the welcome to Christian and Hopeful into heaven, as described in the closing scene of *Pilgrim's Progress.*

(3) **A new name written which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.** "The 'new name' had been to Isaiah and Jeremiah the formula for expressing the new life of blessedness in store for those to whom it was applied; as Peter became 'Rock,' and John was named 'Boanerges,' son of thunder. The 'new name' was the token of a character transformed and perfected, a name the full significance of which should be known only to him who was conscious of the transformation." — *Plumptre.* "To exchange names is to establish some participation in one another's being." — *Herbert Spencer.* "Hence, as we may suppose, came the well nigh universal Oriental practice of interweaving the name of one's Deity with one's name, as a symbolic evidence of one's covenant-union with the Deity." — *Henry Clay Trumbull.*

IV. GLIMPSES OF THE REMAINING FOUR CHURCHES.

THYATIRA

The Good to be Cherished	Modern Ak-Hissar = The White City, now 20,000 inhabitants	*The Evil to be Overcome*
Love, Faith, Service, Patience, Good works		Teachings and practices of Jezebel (See 1 Kings 16–21) These refused to repent, and suffered great tribulation

THE REWARD OF OVERCOMING. (1) **Authority over the nations to rule them with a rod of iron.** Its faithful members shall become ruling princes, with the almighty power of the Father, to conquer the powers of evil.

(2) **And I will give him the Morning Star**, the sign and proof of the new day that is to conquer all the darkness of sin and error, and every evil in the world.

Note that the light which shines from a Morning Star is the reflection of rays from the sun itself that makes the Day. Of the good things found in Thyatira it is said that **the last were more than the first.** It was a growing church.

"Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong —
Nay, but she aimed not at glory, no lover of glory she:
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be." — *Tennyson.*

" We desire immortality, not as the reward of virtue, but as its continuance. Virtue can no more be rewarded than joy can ; it is its own reward."

SARDIS

The outward history of Sardis was a type of its spiritual experience. The river Pactolus, renowned for its golden sands, flowed through the city. Midas, who was fabled to turn every thing he touched into gold, was one of its kings. Crœsus, who reigned there 2500 years ago was famous as the richest king of the then world, living in unparalleled splendor ; and was the first of all kings to mint gold and silver coins. Solon the wise man of Athens visited there. It was conquered by Cyrus, but slowly revived again. It was destroyed by earthquakes but lived again. Its stronghold disintegrated by earthquakes fell over in part upon the city and thirty feet deep beneath the soil Sardis lay for centuries. " Even the everlasting hills on which it was built have changed their shape, being composed of a friable substance scarcely more solid than hardened mud."

The Church at Sardis **receives no praise,** as a whole. **I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die.**

To Them that Overcome. These were only a few, but to those few " came even a more beautiful and consoling message than to any other church of the seven." For they overcame a religious atmosphere that was more deadening and benumbing than any other of the churches. The few struggling against wind and tide, **shall walk with Me in white ; for they are worthy,** — " as Roman citizens wore the pure white toga on days of triumph as they walked through the streets of Rome following the victorious general who had won a battle over a foreign foe." And their names will never be blotted out of the Book of Life. And Jesus **will confess their names before my Father and before his angels.**

PHILADELPHIA

The Good to be Cherished

Good works, recognized as worthy of praise.
The open door to those they should help.
Holding fast that which thou hast, — thy zeal, faith, endurance, open door :
That no man take thy crown for victories gained.

Now *Ala Shehr,* with about 20,000 inhabitants. Philadelphia and Smyrna are the only ones of the Seven Churches to whom no word of censure was spoken ; and the only ones which have continuously maintained the worship of Christ through all the centuries since this letter was written. " Here still exist the remains of 24 churches."

The Things to be Overcome

The loss of the open door.
The neglect of God's word.
The denial of Christ.
The failure in the hour of trial.
The loss of the Crown of Righteousness.

The Rewards of Overcoming. (1) **I will make him a pillar in the Temple of my God** sustaining it, a permanent part. (2) **I will write upon him the name of my God,** showing that he belongs to God, is like God, is part of his family, and peculiarly identified with him. (3) He will write upon him **the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem** ; for he shall partake of all the qualities of that city which **cometh down out of heaven.** Every act, every word, every characteristic will prove that he belongs to it. (4) He shall have Christ's own **new name** written upon him. It is probable that this refers to the difference between what Jesus appeared to be when on earth, — the perfect man, the Son of God as seen in the flesh through mortal eyes, and the glorious Lamb of God, the King of Kings, the transformer of the world into the kingdom of heaven, seen in his true glory. Professor Ramsay is right in saying that all the three names are the same.

Illustration. There is a story of some monks in early days, who were striving each to make the most beautiful copy of the gospels. Suddenly the angel Gabriel appeared in radiant light. " ' I bring,' the angel said, ' a crown of exceeding richness for the man among all men who in his life has best transcribed the Gospels of our adorable Lord. For such a one there waits an endless benediction ! ' It was one blissful moment for the superior of St. Luke's. Heaven as well as earth had recognized the matchless work of those tireless copyists, Father John and Brother Stephen and Brother Philip. It was bliss indeed !

" But Gabriel began to speak again : ' Here is the home of one who made the truest copies of God's Word. No other manuscript was ever so fair as his. For he, Brother Paul, wrote the gospel of our Lord in his life. With words of love and tender care he wrote his days full of gentle ministries and made the nights shine with help and cheer. Hereafter let it be known that the best copy of God's Word is a living copy, and they are the best copyists who write the Holy Gospels in their hearts and illumine them with Christly lives.'

" And long afterward it would be said of one who lived a blameless life, ' He is writing the gospel of Brother Paul.' " — *C. E. Spaulding* in *The Epworth Herald.*

LAODICEA, THE LUKEWARM CHURCH

This church was in a wealthy city famous for woollen factories and medical schools. Great men of the world visited it. It grew rich and self-satisfied. The church felt its malarial atmosphere. It grew lukewarm in spiritual things. It was neither cold nor hot. Religion was well enough, but, with their wealth and business cares what need had they of religious blessings, and spiritual riches? They did not even know that they were **wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.** " Money making and money spending satisfied them." " A Laodicean is one of the meanest types of men." **Because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.**

" The Laodicean church is the only one which is absolutely and wholly condemned." — *Ramsay.* " To-day it is the most desolate and God-forsaken of all the seven cities." — *F. E. Clark.*

Means for Redeeming Laodicea. (1) **As many as I love, I reprove and chasten** (Am. R.).

(2) Exhortation to **repent**, and gain the true riches (Isa. 55 : 1, 2).

(3) The Saviour **stands at the door and knocks.**

(4) **If any man hear my voice . . . I will come into him and will sup with him, and he with me** in intimate communion.

(5) *The Reward for Overcoming* the deadly lukewarmness, is, according to Plumptre, " the highest and most glorious of all the promises with which the Seven Messages end," — **I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne** (Am. R.).

A GENERAL SUMMARY (From Professor Ramsay).

" Among the Seven Churches two only are condemned absolutely, and without hope of pardon.	*Sardis* is dead *Laodicea* is rejected
Among the Seven Cities two only are at the present day absolutely deserted and uninhabited.	*Sardis* *Laodicea*
Two Churches only are praised in an unreserved, hearty, and loving way.	*Smyrna* *Philadelphia*
Two cities have enjoyed and earned the glory of being champions of Christianity in the centuries of war that ended in the Turkish conquest ; the last cities to yield long after all others had succumbed.	*Smyrna* *Philadelphia*
Other two churches are treated with mingled praise and blame, though on the whole the praise outweighs the blame.	*Pergamum* *Thyatira*
Both these still exist as flourishing towns.	*Pergamum* *Thyatira*
One church alone was moved from its place to a site two miles distant, now an insignificant village.	*Ephesus* "

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

LESSON XII. — December 17.

THE HOLY CITY. — Revelation 21 : 1–4, 9–14, 22–27; 22 : 1–5.

PRINT 21 : 1–4, 22–27. COMMIT 21 : 3, 4.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples.* — REV. 21 : 3.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

"A young girl who had for years looked out with interest on the first heaven and the first earth, with the thought, in her mind and in the mind of her parents, that she saw there all that any human eye could see, was found, by an incidental disclosure, to be near-sighted in a degree before unsuspected. Being taken to an oculist, she was fitted with glasses; and as she looked upward and outward with these new aids to vision, she saw before her 'a new heaven and a new earth.' The myriad stars by night, and the limitless profound of the blue sky by day, were all new to her; and so was the far reach of the landscape perspective toward the distant horizon on every side. Where had been only a dim haze before, there was now distinctness of form and color in a beauty hitherto undreamed of."

It is well for us who have been looking too intently at the earth and earthly things around us, to lift up our eyes and see the vision St. John saw of the New Heaven and the New Earth, that we may prepare for them, and do our best to make the vision a reality.

LEARN BY HEART.

Rev. 21 : 1–4, 26, 27; 22 : 1–5.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

See Lesson 10 on the Book of Revelation.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries and other books on *Revelation*, named in Lessons X and XI. *Ecce Homo*, chap. 24. Prof. Henry Drummond's *The City Without a Church* is very illuminating. Phillips Brooks' *Sermons Preached in English Churches*, "The Christian City." *The Heavenly City* by Rev. Dr. Edwin W. Rice, D.D. (Union Press). Dr. Stanton's *The Starry Universe the Christian's Future Empire.* Morlaix's *The Celestial Country*, Jeremy Taylor's *Heaven*, and David Dickson's *The New Jerusalem.* Interesting suggestions as to heaven come from such books as Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress;* Mrs. Oliphant's *Little Pilgrim;* Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward's *The Gates Ajar.*

Henry Van Dyke's *The Mansion* is bright and practical. Mrs. Anne Preston's *Poems*, "The Ideal and the Real."

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The last two chapters as the best possible ending of the Book of Revelation.
And of the completion of the Bible.
How far are these two chapters literal, and how far symbolical and typical?
Are they any the less true on this account?
Why was this form the best for revealing the truth?
In what ways do these descriptions help us in our daily life?
How do the material blessings aid us in advancing in usefulness?
Heaven as an ideal.
Heaven as a help to a true and good life now and here.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Kingdom of Heaven, as the Ideal and Goal of the World in which we Live, and of each Individual Life.

I. THE VISION OF THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH, 21 : 1–7.
II. THE GATES TO THE CITY OF GOD, 21 : 9–21.
III. THE CITY OF GOD IN THE MAKING. COMING DOWN OUT OF HEAVEN FROM GOD, 21 : 22–27; 22 : 1–5.

INTRODUCTION. In Lesson X (chapter 1) we studied Jesus Christ in his resurrection glory, the source, the power, — the King of kings, and Lord of lords, — for the redemption of the human race.

In Lesson XI (chapters 2 and 3) we studied what the glorified Christ was actually doing through his Churches, as representatives of his kingdom on earth through whom his kingdom as it is in heaven was to come.

AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

The following chapters describe in symbols and pictures the discipline and training of God's people during the long generations that followed.

In the lesson for to-day we have a vision of the final triumph of Christianity, the accomplishment of its work of redemption in this world.

I. **THE VISION OF THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH**, vs. 1–7. It was given to St. John to look down the ages and to see the vision of the consummation of Christianity's work on earth, — the answer to the prayer Christ taught his disciples to pray —

Thy kingdom come
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven —

the fulfilment of all the promises of the Bible, as to the coming of the kingdom of God.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.

First. The New Heaven. We know nothing of the inhabitants of the vast universe of mighty stars, nor of how God is dealing with them. There are doubtless vast numbers of different methods in the various stars and systems of stars.

But in the little corner of the universe inhabited by man, we know something of God's dealings and methods.

The most notable peculiarity is that the individuals of the race live but a brief time on the earth, which is God's school for the training of His children born there, and after a few years each one ends his earthly career, and his soul is transferred to some unseen region beyond. All that have believed in Him so as to obey His commands are taken to His unseen but real kingdom of Heaven. With these only are we concerned in the verses we are studying to-day, which belong to the work and triumph of Jesus Christ and his principles.

This double, or parallel, process has been going on from the creation of man all down the ages, — one continuous dying of the earthly body, and transfer of the soul to the unseen heaven. This is a simple universal fact to which our attention is called daily. And its purpose seems to be to press upon every human being a strong motive for learning God's lessons of love and righteousness in this earthly school, so that we may be prepared to enter after death the higher grade of the heavenly life.

God has Given us some Glimpses of Heaven. It may be as Dr. Stanton writes in his "*The Starry Universe the Christians' Future Empire*," that "the Scriptural indications are that God's Children are to Inherit All His Illimitable Kingdoms; from Heaven as a Metropolis, Exploring and Enjoying Them at Will." Who knows? Heaven is more a character, a spiritual state, than any limited place. "The kingdom of God is within you," as well as among you. It is to be with God and Jesus in a peculiarly beautiful way. **He shall dwell with them and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away** (21:3, 4). We know that it is a kingdom of Love, abounding in the fruits of the Spirit. We know that Jesus has prepared many mansions for his disciples there. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). The Bible teaches that the change from this life to the life beyond the grave is a change to a larger and more glorious life, from the familiar natural body to an appearance in glory when "the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43). We have hints of this glory in the appearance of Jesus, Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration (Luke 9:29–31).

Death cannot itself change the character. All that any one has gained of mental and moral power remains, and becomes a preparation for the larger work and greater opportunities to which one is transferred by death. The faithful use of the one or two or five talents prepares one who is thus faithful over a few things to be made ruler over many things (Matthew 25); and in the parable of the pounds (Luke 19) the faithful user of each pound was promoted to authority over a whole city. The change that follows death is like that of a seed, the planting and rising again of which does not change its nature, but transfers its life from the dark ground to the sunlight of the

upper air, where it develops into a sphere of usefulness and blessing and joy and fruitfulness absolutely inconceivable before it died and was raised again.

Compare Dan. 12 : 3; Matt. 25 : 34; John 14; Rom. 8 : 17; 1 Cor. 2 : 9; 13 : 12; 2 Cor. 5 : 4; Eph. 1 : 18; 1 Thes. 4 : 17; 2 Tim. 4 : 8; Heb. 13 : 14; 2 Pet. 1 : 11; 1 John 3 : 2. "He that overcometh" in Rev. 2 and 3; Rev. 7 : 9–17; Rev. 22, and many other references.

What is the New Heaven? as different from the heaven which is always beyond and above us. It must mean some comsummation or goal toward which heaven has been moving. It may be **the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God,** so that the kingdom of heaven above and the kingdom of heaven on earth are one. It may refer to the second coming of Christ. It may refer to the change made in the righteous when they are raised from the dead with their spiritual bodies, and **this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,** and **Death is swallowed up in victory** as described in 1 Cor. 15.

Raphael.

The Transfiguration. Detail.

Second. The Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. Jesus began the announcement of his mission by proclaiming that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. That kingdom touched the earth when God talked with Adam in the garden, and it was doing its work throughout the Old Testament times as we read in the prophets and the psalms. But it was when Christ and Christianity came and the Holy Spirit, with all the forces and influences that make heaven what it is, the mightiest love of God and love to man, making for righteousness, — that the kingdom of heaven began rapidly to extend its beneficent sway over the nations of the world.

"Christianity is oftentimes put into a false position as regards its relation to the world. Men note the suffering of humanity caused by poverty, pestilence, disease, and they ask, 'What do you make of that?' Men take the characteristic sins of humanity, injustice, greed and cruelty, and lust for blood, the lust for pride and place, the lust of the flesh, the manifold forms in which sin has wrought itself into the race, and say to the Christian, 'What do you make of that?'

"Christianity is not responsible for those evils. Its business is to cure these evils and wrongs. The Christian wants to transform the world, to recreate it, to fashion it new. To use the original apostolic phrase, the Christian seeks to bring the world 'into subjection' to Jesus. He looks upon it as a world that is disordered, abnormal, chaotic. He seeks to effect in it the cosmos of a world which exists in obedience to God's will, order and the normality of a world that fulfills the purpose of its Maker and achieves the destiny of his holy will." — *Rockwell H. Potter.*

We stand by St. John on Patmos, as he looks down the centuries, and while we cannot see with him the kingdom of heaven fully come among the inhabitants of the earth, we can see the increasing signs of its coming, and most of all in the marvellous progress during the last hundred years, in every direction in which the kingdom of God is coming. We have the absolute assurance from what our eyes can see, that Christ's prayer is being answered, that His kingdom is coming, and His will shall yet be done on earth as it in heaven.

"But God in His Heaven still ruleth:
They that follow Him shall know
Though kingdoms and thrones may perish,
One empire no power can o'erthrow.

"As sure as the morning it cometh,
The reign of Jehovah above:
Nor princes nor armies can vanquish
His kingdom of light and of love." — *Emily Tolman.*

"O Golden Day, the ages' crown
Alight with heavenly love,
Rare day of Prophecy's renown —
On to thy zenith move.
When all the world with one accord
In full-voiced unity
Shall sing: One Master, Christ, is ours
And Brethren all are we." — *C. Dickinson.*

Third. The New Earth, The Ideal and Goal of the Material World will be the product of the new heaven. As fast and as far as the people living on the earth become

2. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

4. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

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filled with the spirit and life of "the new heaven," so fast will the physical world become transformed into a more perfect instrument for the use and work of the higher spiritual life. The century in which we are living is an illustration and proof of this double and parallel movement. The spirit of Christ that is spreading the Gospel all over the world, the spirit of love and service which is seeking to uplift and save and cure and ameliorate the bodies and souls of all who are in need, — these could not accomplish their purpose so perfectly, so abundantly, without the wonderful development of the hitherto unknown powers of the physical world, beyond all the visions and dreams of men.

2. **As a bride adorned for her husband.** The most perfect symbol of mutual love and attractiveness.

"And homes of purity, and mills and marts
And shops of industry, and shrines of arts, —
To build all these, in days now drawing nigh
After the pattern shown us in the sky." — *Washington Gladden.*

V. 1. **And there was no more sea.** Among the ancients the sea was a turbulent, hostile monster, "devouring men with its insatiable maw" (*New Century Bible*), a means of separation, of destruction, of wrecks, of hurricanes that hide the stars. Therefore as a symbol and type it had no place in the renewed earth.

V. 5. **He that sitteth on the throne said, Behold I make all things new. . . . And he said to John, Write: for these words are faithful and true.**

"Yet, sometimes glimpses on my sight,
Through present wrong, the eternal right;
And step by step, since time began,
I see the steady gain of Man;

"That all the good the old time had
Remains to make our own time glad, —
Our common daily life divine
And every land a Palestine." — *Whittier.*

LESSONS FOR OUR DAY FROM THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH.

First. It is one of the marvels and glories of the Bible that its Golden Age is always before us, not a dream of the Past but a promise and assurance of better times to come.

"Onward in heaven, still onward is my flight,
Before me Day — behind me is the night." — (*Faust.*)

The Great Value of this assurance of the success of our Leader, the triumph of Christianity, the victory of Good over Evil, is the motive power it furnishes, new life, new enthusiasm, new courage. We are fighting against principalities and powers of evil, but even in the darkest day we know that our cause shall triumph, our work shall be a success. There is a great deal of evil in the world yet, in the best of countries, in the best of people. But it is evil fought against. It is good gaining the victory slowly but surely. The very revelations of evil, the controversies and conflicts, are signs that the power of Christ is working upon the evil, a never ending conflict till the good has triumphed.

Dr. R. S. Storrs, in one of his greatest orations, exclaimed: "I know the obstacles, but I know as well the power behind! I do not see success as yet, but I know that it is coming. So I do not see the cathedral as yet, when I go into the confused quarry-yard and see there the half-wrought stones, the clumsy blocks that are by and by to be decorated capitals. But when at last they are finished in form and brought together, the mighty building rises in the air, an ever-during psalm in rock. I do not see yet the perfect kingdom of God upon earth, but I see the colors which are to blend in it. I see the already half-chiseled rock out of which it shall be wrought; and I am not going to despond now, when so much already has been accomplished."

Second. The New Heaven and the New Earth place before us the Goal and the Ideal toward which we are to move, the Purpose for which we are to work. They are the goal which we are to seek for our own selves, the character toward which we are to grow.

"The tasks, the joys of earth, the same in heaven will be;
Only the little brook has widened to the sea."

The ideal, the picture of man and the world as it is to be, shows us clearly what we are to put into our lives and characters in order to make the vision a fact. It is both an inspiration and a guide. "God never permitted us to form a theory too beautiful for his power to make practical."

"The thing we long for, that we are
For one transcendent moment,
Before the Present poor and bare
Can make its sneering comment.

"Still, through our paltry stir and strife,
Glows down the wished Ideal,
And Longing moulds in clay what Life
Carves in the marble Real." — *Lowell.*

"Thine early dreams, which came in shapes of light,
Came, bearing prophecy —
Commissioned sweetly to unfold
Thy possible to thee.
Fear not to build thine eyrie in the heights,
Bright with celestial day;
And trust thyself unto thine inmost soul
In simple faith alway.
And God shall make divinely real
The highest forms of thy ideal." — *Anne Preston.*

But when we have reached the goal, what then? A writer in a recent Century Magazine says that "the failure of almost all Utopias and ideal states lies in the absence of all power to suggest how the happy folk who have conquered all the ills and difficulties of life are to employ themselves reasonably and eagerly when there is nothing left to improve. . . . In the Pilgrim's Progress at the very outset of the journey, *Evangelist* asks *Christian* why he is standing still. He replies:

"'Because I know not whither to go.'"

But we may be sure that when we have reached one goal, there are other goals and ideals beyond for us to attain.

Third. The Goal and Ideal of Heaven is the means by which we can test our daily lives, and the whole course of conduct, — just as Dr. A. J. Gordon in his dream *How Christ Came to Church*, tested himself and his Church by the way Jesus would look upon them. That is the way we should think of heaven. More than this, the vision of what this world is to be shows us what things must be left out of our lives, because they cannot have entrance into that kingdom.

The question we should ask ourselves is, Are we going toward this heavenly ideal? Is this that we are doing, what we would do if we were among the angels and glorified saints?

II. **THE GATES TO THE CITY OF GOD**, 21 : 9–14. The city of God, the glory and blessedness of which is pictured again and again in these closing chapters, will be considered later. Only a glimpse or two, — flashes of its radiant glory, — are given here, indicating what attractions are within its walls that would make people desire to enter its gates.

The Walls of an ancient city were built for defence against enemies, for the protection of the inhabitants, and the safety of their possessions. The walls pictured around "the city of God" were symbols of all the precious things within it. The inhabitants are those who love and serve God, who are seeking to do His will, who have consecrated themselves to Him and their Lord Jesus Christ, as true citizens of the heavenly city.

The Gates are the means of entering into the city. Those who are true citizens can go in and out at will. They belong there.

There are Twelve Gates, three on each of the four sides of the city, so that all who desire to be true citizens can come from every direction, from every race, of every class, rich or poor, black or white, outcasts, heathen, criminals, every one who wants to repent and to follow Christ. The twelve gates are twelve Welcomes.

"And this one thought of hope and trust comes with its healing balm
As here I lay my brow in dust, and breathe my lowly psalm;
That not for heights of victory won, but those I tried to gain,
Will come my gracious Lord's '*Well done*,' and sweet effacing rain." — *Kipling.*

THE GATES SHALL NOT BE SHUT **at all by day; for there shall be no night there** (21 : 25). Always there is a Welcome, always the invitation of Christ, Come unto me. Remember, John is speaking in the language of symbols. We are not to understand that heaven will be without the beauty of the night, the splendor of stars, the soft curtain of darkness, the loveliness of the moonlight, or what will answer to

22. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.

24. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

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these charms. But there will be none of the terrors of our nights, the fears of unseen dangers, the increased sickness and death.

An Angel at each Gate stood at the entrance to welcome every one who sincerely desired to be a citizen, and as a guard to keep out all evils of every kind. Each one of them may have had an Ithuriel's spear, " for no falsehood can endure touch of celestial temper, but returns of force to its own likeness." Milton represents Satan in the form of a toad whispering tempting thoughts in the ear of Eve, but when Ithuriel touched the toad with his spear the " Fiend started up in his own shape."

The Gates Keep out all Evil by means of the Angels that guarded them. v. 8. **The fearful** = " cowards, or apostates, who deny Christ in the persecution, and worship Cæsar through fear of suffering " ; **unbelieving**, faithless, untrustworthy ; **abominable**, defiled, and fouled by the impurities of the pagan cults ; **murderers, fornicators, sorcerers** = poisoners, dealers in philtres and magic ; **idolaters, and all liars**, " every one that loveth and maketh a lie," those who cheat, are false in their dealings, make false professions. — From *Exp. Gk. Test.* It is not possible for such to enter the city of God, because their characters prevent them. They have nothing in common with the characteristics of the citizens there. God wants them to come. He urges them by every motive to come. " Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed ; and make you a new heart and a new spirit : for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD : wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye " (Ezek. 18 : 31, 32).

III. **THE CITY OF GOD IN THE MAKING. COMING DOWN OUT OF HEAVEN FROM GOD**, 21 : 22–27 ; 22 : 1–5. It is well to read over these verses several times. The descriptions and meanings are plain. Many of them have been noted in the previous portions of this lesson.

There is nothing within the range of my knowledge that can be as helpful on this section of St. John's vision, as the words of two of the greatest, sanest, most devotedly Christian preachers, who both, since writing, have experienced what it is to live in the city of God.

Bishop Phillips Brooks in his *Sermons Preached in English Churches* has one preached in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, on " The Christian City."

Professor Henry Drummond, F.R.S.E., has shown wonderful skill and power in his interpretations of Scripture for young men. One of his addresses has for its subject " The City without a Church," " I saw no Temple therein."

The remainder of this lesson will consist chiefly of quotations from these two addresses.

TWO DIFFERENT SYMBOLS OR TYPES are used to describe the kingdom of heaven in the verses of this lesson.

1. *The symbol of a city*, vs. 22–27. " Two very startling things arrest us in John's vision of the future. The first is that the likest thing to Heaven he could think of was a City ; the second that there was no Church [Temple] in that City. . . . City life is human life at its intensest. Christianity is the religion of cities. Its sphere is the street, the market place, the working-life of the world. With actual things, with Humanity in its every-day dress, with the traffic of the streets, with gates and houses, with work and wages, with sin and poverty, with all the things and all the relations and all the people of the city, Christianity has to do, and has more to do than anything else." — *Professor Drummond.*

2. *The Symbol of a Paradise* (22 : 1–5), a perfectly kept rural park is essential to the completion of the conception of the new heaven, or new earth.

Here is **a pure river of the water of life**, satisfying every thirst of the soul, the symbol of the Holy Spirit, without which every living thing perishes. It proceeds from **the throne of God and of the Lamb**, *a marvellous unfailing stream.* It is the fulfilment of the Oriental legend of a fountain into whose waters a good angel infused the mysterious power that a new fountain rose and gushed wherever some drops fell on the barren plain, so that a traveller carrying a portion of this water could safely traverse any desert however wide or dry, because he took with him the secret of unfailing springs ; and he could impart their waters to others.

"Beneath the cross those waters rise, and he who finds them there
All through the wilderness of life the living stream may bear;
And blessings follow in his steps, until where'er he goes
The moral wastes begin to bud and blossom as the rose."

Loch Katrine, embowered among the Highlands of Scotland, a poem in water, immortalized in story and song till it seems almost transfigured with a glory beyond its natural beauty and charm, is yet the source of the water supply of the city of Glasgow, flowing down among the homes of the poor, cleansing the filth from the streets, bringing refreshment, cheer, comfort, cleanliness, and health everywhere. So to every one who has the Gospel, or possesses wealth, culture, education, talent, is given the privilege and duty of sending the living water in copious streams to the heathen, to the poor, to the sinful, to all who are in need.

Here too are the trees of life, and all the fruits of the spirit ; and even the leaves of the trees are for the healing of the nations. This Paradise is a part of the city.

The City in its Making. " What John saw, we may fairly take it, was the future of all Cities. It was the dawn of a new social order, a regenerate humanity, a purified society, an actual transformation of the Cities of the world into Cities of God.

" This City, then, which John saw is none other than your City, the place where you live — as it might be, and as you are to help to make it.

" To make cities — that is what we are here for. To make good cities — that is for the present hour the main work of Christianity. One Christian City, one City in any part of the earth, whose citizens from the greatest to the humblest lived in the spirit of Christ, where religion had overflowed the Churches and passed into the streets, inundating every house and workshop, and permeating the whole social and commercial life — one such Christian City would seal the redemption of the world.

" Some such City, surely, was what John saw." — *Drummond.*

" The New Testament reverts to the individual . . . but it too advances towards its larger personality, and leaves the strong figure of the Christian church, and the brilliant architecture of the New Jerusalem burning upon its latest pages."—*Bp. Brooks.*

The City Begins with the Individual. " Christianity is primarily a personal force, and only secondarily does it deal with bodies of men, whether with churches or states. The souls of men must be converted ; and out of these converted souls the Christian Church or the Christian State must grow. It is fatal to Christianity to reverse that truth. . . . But none the less is it true that when the right beginning has been rightly made, when souls have believed in Christ, and when a great multitude of personal believers, who have been fused together by the fire of their common faith, present before the world the unity of a Christian Church or a Christian Nation that new unity is a real unit, a genuine being with its own character and power." — *Bishop Phillips Brooks.*

" If you ask me which of all these things is the most important, I reply that among them there is only one thing of superlative importance, and that is *yourself.* By far the greatest thing a man can do for his City is to be a good man. Simply to live there as a good man, as a Christian man of action and practical citizen, is the first and highest contribution any one can make to its salvation. . . .

" I return to this old, old plea for the individual soul. I do not forget that my plea is for the City. But I plead for good men, because good men are good leaven. If their goodness stop short of that, if the leaven does not mix with that which is unleavened, if it does not do the work of leaven — that is, to *raise something* — it is not the leaven of Christ. The question for good men to ask themselves is : Is my goodness helping others? . . .

" In this vision of the City he confronts us with a new definition of a Christian man — the perfect saint is the perfect citizen." — *Professor Drummond.*

You cannot make the city of God out of moral Thersites and Calibans.

"You cannot make a Golden Age out of leaden instincts."
You cannot build a marble palace out of mud.

"Reformers of all schools are apt to forget that behind the problem of a better social order lies the problem of the better man." The one essential is the making of good citizens. Purify the fountain. Only from this standpoint can he look who

> . . . "dipt into the future, far as human eye can see,
> Saw the vision of the World and all the wonder that could be;
> Till the war drum throbbed no longer, and the battle flags were furled,
> In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World." — *Tennyson.*

Three Essentials of the New City. "Can we conceive of Christianity as so pervading the life of a community that not merely the souls shall be Christian, but the city shall be Christian, distinctly different in its corporate life and action from a heathen city.

"Christianity, or the change of man's life by Christ, has three different aspects in which it appears, — three ways in which it makes its power known. It appears as Truth, as Righteousness, or as Love. . . . New beliefs, higher ways of action, and deeper affections towards fellow men. . . . A truer faith, a purer righteousness, and a more bounteous charity. . . .

"This is a Christian city, — a believing city, . . . a humanity, created by God, redeemed by Jesus Christ, inspired and pointed on to indefinite futures by a Holy Spirit." — *Bishop Brooks.*

What are you to believe? "I make this, then, in all seriousness as a definite, practical proposal. You wish, you say, to be a religious man. Well, be one. There is your City; begin. But what are you to believe? Believe in your City. What else? In Jesus Christ. What about Him? That He wants to make your City better; that that is what He would be doing if He lived there. What else? Believe in yourself — that you, even you, can do some of the work which He would like done, and that unless you do it, it will remain undone. How are you to begin? As Christ did. First He looked at the City; then He wept over it; then He died for it." — *Professor Drummond.*

Righteousness and Love. "That old Jewish conception of a holy City is not all a dream. Remember, Oh remember, that your righteousness is not for yourself alone; it is for your city. I am speaking to business men, who, if they will be really Christians, may help to put a more Christian character into business life. I am speaking to women of society, who, if they will be really Christians, may make the social character of the town more Christlike, more true, serious, lofty, pure and intelligent, less sordid, sensual and ignorant; not for yourself, but for your city, and you shall bear witness that Christ is among you — that this is indeed a city of the Living God." — *Bishop Brooks.*

"The Cities where we live, with all their suffering and sin, shall one day, by the gradual action of the forces of Christianity, be turned into Heavens on earth." — *Professor Drummond.*

> "Have we seen her, The New City, O my brothers, where she stands
> The superb, supreme Creation of unnumbered human hands;
> The complete and sweet expression of unnumbered human souls
> Bound by love to work together while their love their work controls?
> Have you seen her, The New City, in her glory? Ah, not yet
> Gilds the sun with actual splendor, chimney top and minaret,
> But her site is surely purchased, and her pattern is designed,
> And her blessed ways are visions for all striving humankind!
> The New City, O my brothers, we ourselves shall never see —
> She will gladden children's children into holy ecstasy —
> Let our lives be in the building! We shall lay us in the sod,
> Happier, if our human travail builds their avenues to God!"
> — *Marguerite O. B. Wilkinson* in *The Independent, June 13, 1912.*

Combination and Federation of all the Christian forces inspired by intense earnestness and zeal that grows not cold, are essential. There never before were so many signs of the coming of the City of God from heaven as there are to-day; never so many great movements toward it, so many combinations of influences, so many instrumentalities for aiding its coming, such great strides toward "the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the world." We can get glimpses of the day star that heralds the morning, shining through the rifts in the storm-clouds of evil. Amid all the clamors of wickedness we can hear, only too faintly but distinct and clear,

> "Beautiful as the songs of the immortals,
> The holy melodies of Love arise."

"I may not stay to see the day
When the great Saviour shall bear sway
And earth shall glitter in the ray
That cometh from above.
But come it fast or come it slow
'Twill come at last, I surely know
And Heaven and Earth shall feel the glow
And men shall call it Love."

THE INVITATION

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. — Rev. 22 : 17.

LESSON XIII. — December 24.

CHRISTMAS LESSON. UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN. Isa. 9 : 2–7.

COMPARE Heb. 2 : 5-18. COMMIT vs. 6, 7.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* — Isa. 9 : 6.

THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS.

The Christmas lesson naturally follows the three lessons in Revelation; where Jesus in glory is portrayed, and the final success of his work is foreseen in a vision, — the new heaven and the new earth.

The coming of the Son of God into the world was the greatest era in its history. We study him as a child. We see him living on the earth. Here in Isaiah we have a vision of his real nature and power, by which he is accomplishing the work he came to do.

LEARN BY HEART.

Isa. 9 : 6, 7 ; Heb. 2 : 9, 18.

THE LESSON IN ITS SETTING.

Time. — The prophecy of this marvellous child was spoken during the reign of Ahaz, King of Judah, B.C. 738–723.

Circumstances. — Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, was attacking Syria, and the tribes of Northern Israel, and carrying away captives to Assyria. Judah was in danger of invasion by these hordes (2 Kin. 15 : 29).

Place. — Isaiah was preaching in Jerusalem, his home.

This Vision of the Messiah-Saviour was made known more than 800 years before John saw the vision of the glorified Jesus, in Revelation.

THE ROUND TABLE.

FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.

The historical situation.
Isaiah as a prophet.
Who were the people that walked in darkness?
The land of the shadow of death.
What was the joy that came to them?
What is the figure of speech in v. 5?
Who is foretold in vs. 6 and 7?
How does this child represent Jesus, when he came to earth?
What light is thrown upon these verses by the description in Rev. 1 : 12–18?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT : The Coming of the Saviour of the World, and his Kingdom.

I. The Jewish Nation Walk in Darkness, 8 : 5–9 : 1.
II. The Joy of Deliverance, vs. 2–5.
III. Isaiah's Vision of the Redeemer, v. 6. Compared with Jesus who was Born in Bethlehem.
IV. The Kingdom over which Jesus is King, v. 7.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Isaiah, as Geo. Adam Smith's, in *The Expositor's Bible. The Cambridge Bible.* Maclaren's *Expositions of Isaiah*, 2 vols. *The New Century Bible.* Prof. Willis J. Beecher's *The Prophets and the Promise* (Crowell). *Israel's Messianic Hope*, by Professor G. S. Goodspeed, is one of the best general references on this theme. The article "Messiah," by Stanton, in the

Hastings Dictionary of the Bible. Professor Cheyne's *Polychrome Isaiah*, a new translation, printed in several colors, has many points of interest. Professor Driver's *Isaiah ; His Life and Times ;* Professor Sayce's *Times of Isaiah*, illustrating the book from the monuments. *The Analyzed Bible, Isaiah*, 2 vols. by G. Campbell Morgan (Revell).

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Rev. J. Edgar Park's *The Man Who Missed Christmas* (25 cts.) ; and his *The Rejuvenation of Father Christmas* (Pilgrim Press, 50 cts.) have a touch of genius in them.

Rev. Dr. Frederic Dewhurst's *The Magi in the West, and their Search for the Christ* (The Abbey Company, Chicago).

Bishop Brooks' " The earth has grown old with its burden of care " and " O little town of Bethlehem," and Sears' " It came upon the Midnight clear," are among the choicest of our hymns.

Vergil's description in his famous *Fourth Eclogue.*

I. **THE JEWISH NATION WALK IN THE DARKNESS OF THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH**, v. 2 ; 8 : 5–9 : 1. *The Historical Situation* of this part of the lesson must be present, distinct and clear to the mind's eye, if we would understand its meaning. This is especially necessary for children.

We see King Ahaz of Judah trembling in Jerusalem ; and with him is the prophet Isaiah, the wisest and greatest man in his kingdom. They knew that King Ahaz and his people had departed from the true God. Against Isaiah's warnings Ahaz had made molten images to Baal, introduced the moral abominations of the heathen worship, cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and given the sacred vessels as a bribe to the king of Assyria, shut up the temple, built heathen altars in every corner of Jerusalem, burned his children in the fire as human sacrifices. And more than this he had led his nation astray so that " true religion was almost wholly extinguished under this wicked king. In vain did Isaiah warn him, rebuke him, offer him signs, threaten him, urge him to rely on Jehovah ; he doggedly pursued his own course, sought help in every quarter but the right one." — *Rawlinson.*

This was enough to make the guilty king tremble under the burden of a tortured conscience, when he and the prophet standing in Jerusalem looked northward over the kingdom of Israel, and saw the terrible things that were taking place in the northern tribes as they were being desolated by the wild hordes of Syria and Assyria; and then turning a little to the west saw that the overwhelming scourge had reached as far as Samaria within forty miles of Jerusalem. The view was of storm clouds and lightning, and the shadow of death drawing near to Jerusalem.

Portrait of Tiglath-pileser III, from the Walls of his Palace.

George Adam Smith thus pictures the scene. " The darkness deepened across Israel. The Assyrian had come. The northern floods kept surging among the little States of Palestine, and none knew what might be left standing. We can well understand Isaiah pausing, as he did, in face of such rapid and uncontrollable movements. When Tiglath-pileser swept over the plain of Esdraelon, casting down the king of Samaria and the Philistine cities, and then swept back again, carrying off upon his ebb the populations east of the Jordan, it looked very like as if both the houses of Israel should fall.

" In their panic, the people betook themselves to morbid forms of religion ; and at first Isaiah was obliged to quench the hope and pity he had betrayed for them in in-

dignation at the utter contrariety of their religious practices to the word of God. There can be no Divine grace for the people as long as they **seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto the wizards that chirp and that mutter.** For such a disposition the prophet has nothing but scorn, **Should not a people seek unto their God? On behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead?** They must come back to the prophet's own word before hope may dawn. **To the revelation and the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them.**

"The night, however, grew too awful for scorn. There had been no part of the land so given to the idolatrous practices, which the prophet scathed, as **the land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, by the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.** But all the horrors of captivity had now fallen upon it, and it had received at the Lord's hand double for all its sins. The night had been torn enough by lightning; was there no dawn?

"The darkness of these provinces fills the prophet's silenced thoughts. He sees a people **hardly bestead and hungry, fretting themselves, cursing their king,** who had betrayed them, **and their God,** who had abandoned them, **turning their faces upwards** to heaven and **downwards** to the sacred soil from which they were being dragged, **but, behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and into thick darkness they are driven away.**

"It is a murky picture, yet through the smoke of it we are able to discern a wierd procession of Israelites departing into captivity. We date it, therefore, about 732 B.C., the night of Israel's first great captivity."

The Moral Darkness of the world is symbolized by this dark period in the history of Israel. The darkness of the heathen world; the sins and crimes of every degree that have darkened the world everywhere. The desolations caused by wars down all the ages. Read the description in Romans 1: 20–32. Many persons in the most civilized countries are living in the Valley of the Shadow of Death; in prisons, in poor houses, in white slavery, in disease and pain, in the bondage of intemperance and vice. Worldly men of wealth may yet be full of care and selfishness, absorbed in gaining riches at the expense of body and soul.

Assyrian Standard.

Representing the Feroher shooting his arrows against the King's enemies. The circle typifies Eternity.

Illustration. Some years ago a brilliant and witty lecturer entitled one of his lectures "In search of the man of sin." He found sin in the city, in trade, in politics, everywhere, but finally returning to his native village he found the elements of all those sins there, and at last looking into his own heart, and seeing there the seeds from which grew all the crimes he had attacked in others, declares, "I am the man of sin."

II. **THE JOY OF DELIVERANCE,** vs. 2–5. We do not know how long historically the period of darkness continued before the joys of deliverance came to Judah and Jerusalem. The Assyrians captured Samaria and carried its inhabitants captive, and Jerusalem was left in peace. Hezekiah succeeded his father Ahaz, and he entered upon a religious revival in his kingdom. He banished idolatry. "He clave to the Lord, the God of Israel, and departed not from following Him, but kept His commandments." In view of this repentance of Judah, and their returning to the Lord, **the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light,** the same light that shone in the darkness when Jesus actually came about 700 years later.

The prophet saw the dawning rays shining on the darkness, — ignorance was removed, truth revealed, ways made plain, problems solved. God and heaven made known, dangers pointed out.

2. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

3. Thou hast multiplied the nation, *and* not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, *and* as *men* rejoice when they divide the spoil.

4. For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

The light brought with it health, new life, beauty, warmth, power, and all the blessings that the light of heaven can bestow.

3. **Thou hast multiplied the nation.** So he saw it in his vision. The little kingdom of God, represented by the Jewish nation at that time, has already become the dominant power of the world, multiplied hundreds of times in numbers, in character, in power, in joy.

Thou hast increased their joy, as in Am. R. Most scholars accept this reading. **They joy before thee**, the giver of the joy. **According to the joy in harvest**, when men

Assyrian Chariot with Archer, from an Assyrian Tablet.

see the fruits of their labors and promise of plenty. They had sown in tears, but reap in joy. **As men rejoice when they divide the spoil**, triumphant over enemies, rich in goods. It is the joy of deliverance from sin; the joy of the angels who rejoice over each sinner that repents; the joy of forgiveness, of restoration to the family of God; it is the joy of hope, and victory in the war against evil; it is joy unspeakable and full of glory in the service of our Lord.

In Miss Susie M. Best's "Dream of Christmastide," the joy foretold here was made real by Jesus seven centuries later:

"That night when in the Egyptian skies
The Mystic Star dispensed its light,
A blind man turned him in his sleep
And dreamed that he had sight.

"That night when shepherds heard the song
Of hosts angelic choiring near,
A deaf man lay in slumber's spell
And dreamed that he could hear.

"That night when in the cattle's stall
Slept Child and mother in humble fold,
A cripple turned his twisted limbs
And dreamed that he was whole.

"That night o'er the new-born Babe
A tender mother rose to lean,
A loathsome leper smiled in sleep
And dreamed that he was clean."

4. **For**, — another reason for joy, — **thou hast broken the yoke of his burden**, the yoke that rested on the neck and shoulders as the means of carrying a burden; **and the staff of his shoulder** (his back), "the staff with which his back was beaten." — *Cambridge Bible.* **The rod of his oppressor**, the Assyrians who had been ravaging the northern tribes, and threatened Judah. All these oppressions of vast Assyrian

5. For every battle of the warrior *is* with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but *this* shall be with burning *and* fuel of fire.

6. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

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armies had been swept away by a deliverance as wonderful as the destruction of the Midianites under the leadership of Gideon, which was one of the most signal and memorable victories in the history of Israel.

5. (Am. R.) **For all the armor of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be for burning, for fuel of fire.** All that belongs to war, the armor and the weapons of the soldier, and the garments drenched in the blood of the slain, shall be swept away with fire: "Every vestige of war shall be burned up in preparation for the kingdom of universal peace."

Isaiah's picture of the burning of the implements of war, and the garments rolled in blood, for fuel of fire, may have suggested Hawthorne's wonderful story of "Earth's Holocaust" in his *Mosses From an Old Manse*, where all the evils of the world, all the implements of war, all intoxicating liquors, all bad books, were consumed in one vast burning, as fuel for its fire.

It reminds us also of Savonarola's huge Bonfire of Vanities and Follies, as described in *Romola*.

III. **ISAIAH'S VISION OF THE REDEEMER COMPARED WITH THE JESUS WHO WAS BORN AT BETHLEHEM SEVEN CENTURIES LATER**, v. 6. The greatest joy for Israel in Isaiah's time was his vision of the Messiah, the promised Saviour, promised again and again during their history, now made clearer and more definite to them, an undying hope, an unfailing expectation, even in their darkest days; a vision that was to be realized through them for all the world.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. The vision Isaiah saw looking forward seven centuries, we see looking back over 19 centuries. We see Jesus born in Bethlehem, and we listen to the angels' song, on that blessed Christmas morning. How full of joy is the fact that Jesus came from heaven as a child, that he might be the children's Saviour and example.

Think of him in the home, what kind of boy he was there, to his mother; what kind of boy he was in school; and as he grew up to manhood what kind of a workman he was in his father's carpenter shop. He was a living proof, a continual sign, a growing sermon to the people that God was with them in unceasing love and salvation.

Illustration. Plato says: "The child is a charioteer driving two steeds up the long life hill; one steed is white, representing our best impulses; one steed is dark, standing for our worst passions." Jesus had to choose between these, exactly as every child must choose, with a choice on which depends the eternal destiny.

The government shall be upon his shoulder. He was to be a king over his people, their ruler, their leader, their teacher, their guide. He ruled in their hearts by love, as Jesus rules in ours, our king.

The Best Christmas Gift is to enter into the service of this king; to strive with all our souls to bring all men under his benign sway; to labor and give and pray for the coming of his kingdom in every heart, in every land; to help the poor near at hand; to comfort the sorrowing, to join in the support of missions at home and in foreign lands; to be full of enthusiasm for "education, missions, social service, pure politics, good government, true religion, and a hundred aspects of the Christian ideal."

Let this Christmas feeling last all the year round.

And his name, or title. The name stands for the whole man, all that is in him, and all that he possesses, his character, principles, talents, property. When a man signs his name to a promise or check, the whole man stands back of it.

Shall be called Wonderful. Because Jesus' nature was wonderful, being human and divine; his coming at all was a wonderful manifestation of love; his deeds were wonderful, miracles, full of marvellous meaning as well as power; his words were wonderful; his atoning love was wonderful; the kingdom he set up was wonderful. There is nothing so wonderful in the world as Jesus and his advent. See the description of the glorified Jesus, given in Rev. 1:13–16. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). The "seven wonders of the world" are trifles to him.

7. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Thus Christmas celebrates the greatest event in the history of the world.

Counsellor. One who has the wisdom to guide himself and others. Jesus was the embodiment of the wisdom of God. The whole scheme of redemption through Jesus grows upon me more and more as one of marvellous wisdom. A Saviour, both God and man, a personal revelation of God's love, a perfect character and example, the sum of all motives for being good, the atonement that takes away sin while it forgives, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the institution of the church, its continual guidance, an everliving but unseen Saviour, — all these are proofs of wisdom, divine and limitless. He is our *counsellor*, never guiding us astray, but always by the best ways to the best ends. No one guided by him ever failed of success. Jesus is like the pillar of cloud and fire that led Israel through the wilderness safely to the Promised Land. He is the pilot that always brings the ship safely into port.

Some unite these two, and read Wonderful Counsellor. But we see the larger meaning when they are read as separate characterizations. He is wonderful as Counsellor, but also wonderful in many other ways.

Mighty God. Jesus was truly divine, so that he can save to the uttermost, from all sin ; he can be in all places at once to give help ; he has control of all forces for the salvation of men ; he can conquer all enemies, make his kingdom triumphant over all obstacles, can always stand before and above his people, leading them on to higher and higher developments.

Everlasting Father, expressing the divine loving-kindness and tender mercies and pity for men, a love that can never fail, for it is everlasting. Sometimes our fathers emphasized the greatness of God so much that we were inclined to fear more than to love him. But there is no danger of realizing too much the greatness of God, if at the same time we equally realize his Fatherly love.

Prince of Peace. The prince who rules in such a way that peace and prosperity abide in his kingdom. Peace is used to express all the blessings that come to a kingdom where there is peace from outward enemies, peace between rulers and ruled, peace between the different members of the kingdom; no disorders, no idleness, no criminals.

Jesus brings all this peace, and more. He brings peace between man and God, and peace of the soul itself, all its powers and faculties working in perfect harmony.

To Complete this Picture which Isaiah saw in his vision, and which we looking backward see actually realized in Jesus, let us look forward with St. John and see the risen and glorified Jesus as the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

IV. **THE KINGDOM OVER WHICH JESUS IS KING**, v. 7. *Who are the citizens of Jesus' kingdom ?* They are those who accept of Jesus as their Saviour and Leader, and Example ; who strive to live according to his principles and laws, doing his will on earth as it is done in heaven ; and in some way openly acknowledging their loyalty to him. The Christian Church of whatever name or form, is Jesus' representative. " The manufactory of good men, the nursery of the forces which are to redeem the City, will in the main be found to be some more or less formal, more or less imperfect, Christian Church. . . . For the rank and file of us, made of such stuff as we are made of, the steady pressures of fixed institutions, the regular diets of a common worship, and the education of public Christian teaching, are too obvious safeguards of spiritual culture to be set aside." — *Professor Drummond.*

A Growing Kingdom. **Of the increase of his government** — his well-ruled kingdom — in numbers, in power, in the quality of its citizens, in the development of its possibilities, in its growth in various departments, **there shall be no end**. The same is true of its **peace**, the safety from war and internal disturbances, the smooth running of its governmental machinery, the people all prosperous and contented, working together for the good of all.

Upon the throne of David. Jesus was the descendant and heir of David, and his kingdom is the development of the kingdom of David. **To order it**, govern, manage, rule it. **Establish it**, make it firm and enduring. **With judgment**, just decisions, and **justice**, all manner of right between all classes and all individuals (Am. R., " with justice and righteousness "), without which no kingdom can be successful and endure, **from henceforth and forever.**

The Throne of David is referred to here, not only because Jesus was the heir and successor of David, but also because David brought to Israel the greatest era in its whole history. David found the kingdom divided, distracted, subdued by enemies, and in a very low religious condition.

David left the kingdom great in many ways :

1. A united people.
2. A greatly enlarged territory and population.
3. Great progress in the religious life of the people.
4. Great progress in government. The kingdom highly organized as a State, as a military power, as a religious institution.
5. Great increase in wealth, prosperity, and the blessings of life.
6. Peace with all the surrounding nations.

Jesus Christ, coming into the world, brought to it the greatest era in the religious history of the world. And ever since then his kingdom has been growing in every direction, and since the first century never so rapidly and so wonderfully as within the last hundred years, and especially within the last few years.

There is not room in this lesson to go into details; but it would be a very good exercise for the older children to discover by reading and inquiry, in what lines this great progress has been made. For instance, in missions, in the discovery of lands unknown a hundred years ago, in new ways of serving Christ by the increase of hospitals, rescue missions, the Salvation army, reaching the outcasts and neglected, more wisely active churches, Sunday schools, and hundreds of societies for helping the poor, the neglected, the lost, so many that few even in great cities know one hundredth part of what is actually being done in them.

Then let the scholars report on the great development of discoveries and inventions which have made this world an instrument for spreading the Gospel, — the opening of every part of the world, marvellous progress in commerce, travel, railroads, telegraphs, medical science, schools, education, wealth, generous giving, progress in churches, Sunday schools and many, many other things that enable the Gospel to have free course and be glorified.

But while we rejoice and take courage as we see what Jesus has already done, let us not forget that Christmas is calling us to enter with new zeal the work which has been begun, and to enlist under Jesus our captain in the warfare against all the mighty evils that remain. In the words of that great teacher, President Wilbur W. White : "The conquering church is the active, aggressive church. . . . Seizing the whole armor of the Christian its members put the warfare on the basis of a direct, relentless, resistless fight in the open, and press past forms and theories and systems to strike at the men behind them all. It is after the souls of men and against evil of every form, in places high or low, and it proceeds with unceasing vigor and upon uncompromising principles. There must be a return to the development of that active, efficient army of the offensive campaign, trained to endure hardness and content with nothing but a new victory each day and a bivouac nearer the goal each night. Let it concentrate its greatest powers upon the preaching of salvation through Jesus Christ to a lost world, not neglecting the insistence upon individual and social righteousness, nor failing in the compassionate relief of human suffering."

For the zeal, earnestness, burning intensity of desire, **of the Lord of hosts**, the unseen multitudes of angels, the numberless people who are his servants, all the forces of nature, organized like a mighty army to do his will, **will perform this**.

"Christmas in lands of the fir tree and pine,
Christmas in lands of the palm tree and vine;
Christmas where snow peaks stand solemn and white,
Christmas where cornfields lie sunny and bright,
Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night!

"Christmas where children are hopeful and gay,
Christmas where old men are patient and gray,
Christmas where peace, like a dove in its flight,
Broods o'er brave men in the thick of the fight.
Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night!

"For the Christ-Child who comes is the Master of all;
No palace too great — no cottage too small;
The angels who welcome him sing from the height,
'In the city of David a King in his might.'
Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night!"

— *Phillips Brooks.*

Vision of Isaiah B.C. 731	*Actual Fulfilment* B.C. 4, Christmas	*Vision of St. John*
The Saviour of the world foretold and described	The saviour of the world born in Bethlehem	The Glorified Jesus, and his kingdom, the new heaven and the new earth.

LESSON XIV. — December 31.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR. CHRIST COMING, AND COMING TO CHRIST.

READING LESSON: Rev. 22:6–14; 16–21.

PRINT vs. 6–14. COMMIT vs. 12–14.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will; let him take the water of life freely.* — REV. 22:17.

There are few things in teaching a historical lesson so important for both teachers and scholars, or so interesting, as a careful, accurate, bird's-eye view of the whole movement of the history with the relation of the main parts to one another, and to the whole. The Book of the Acts lends itself with peculiar felicity to such a Review.

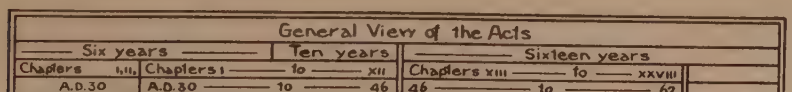
For information concerning the Acts as a book, see Introduction to this volume.

Note the division of the Acts into two main parts at the close of chapter 12.

The first twelve chapters cover a period of 16 years, A.D. 30–46. The church has its central home in Jerusalem and is employed in building up the church, making it strong, increasing its numbers, going forth as home missionaries throughout all Palestine.

The rest of the Acts also covers a period of sixteen years A.D. 46–62, chapters 13–28, and records the foreign missionary work of Paul and his companions.

The series of lessons closes with the vision of the final triumph of Christianity, as seen by St. John in Revelation.



IT IS ESSENTIAL TO USE THE MAPS.

THE TWO POWERS
The Risen Christ
The Holy Spirit

Nothing less than divine power could produce such a change as those made by Christianity which have revolutionized the world.

The first power is the ascended and glorified Jesus.

The second power is that of the Holy Spirit, sent in a visible and audible manner, in order that the people might recognize its reality and power.

Chapters 2–7.

THE HOME CHURCH
Six Years.

The first church consisted of 120 praying men and women.
Peter's first sermon. 3000 converted.
Character of these first church members.
Persons. Peter, John, other Apostles, 5000 Christians, Barnabas, Ananias, Sapphira, seven deacons, including Stephen and Philip, Gamaliel, Pharisees, the Jewish Sanhedrin.
Persecution. Deliverances. Stephen's preaching and martyrdom.
Dissatisfaction, leading to the appointment of deacons.

Chs. 8–12.

Home Missions

throughout Palestine, 10 years.

Persecution. Scatters the disciples throughout Palestine.
Saul of Tarsus converted, at Damascus, goes to Arabia, Tarsus, Cyprus, and Antioch.
Philip — to Samaria, Azotus, Cæsarea — his home and centre of work.
Peter through all quarters, Lydda, Joppa, Cæsarea.
Barnabas to Antioch, which became a great centre for foreign missions.
Disciples go to Phenice, Cyprus, Cyrene and Antioch.

Adventures

Phillip and the Ethiopian, on the road to Gaza.
Peter cured Eneas of the palsy at Lydda; raised Dorcas from the dead at Joppa; lived with Simon the tanner, saw a vision of the sheet let down from heaven, preached the Gospel to the Roman Centurion at Cæsarea, was miraculously delivered from prison.
Paul and Barnabas sent from Antioch to Jerusalem with help for the Christians suffering from famine.

THE ERA OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

16 years. Chs. 13–28

Acts 13 : 1–15 : 35.

Paul's First Missionary Journey

with Barnabas
Two years A.D. 47–49.

Paul and Barnabas with John Mark as their attendant, were sent forth as missionaries by the church at Antioch.
Their field was Asia Minor.
They sailed from Seleucia the seaport of Antioch, to Cyprus, crossed to Perga — to Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and returned to Perga and Attalia, whence they sailed home to Antioch in Syria. They preached the Gospel in every city.

Adventures

On Cyprus they had an adventure with Elymas a sorcerer.
At Perga John Mark left them and went home.
Paul's sermon at Antioch, a type of his preaching.
At Lystra Paul healed a lame man and was at first treated as a god, but was afterwards stoned.
They founded churches, and had large success.

Acts 15 : 40–18 : 22.

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

nearly 3 years, A.D. 50–52.

Paul and Silas. Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece.
Revisiting the churches of Asia Minor.
They enter Europe, — Philippi, Berea, Athens, Corinth, returning via Jerusalem to Antioch the home church.

Adventures

Paul's vision "come over into Macedonia and help us."
Paul casts an evil spirit out of a damsel, and is thrown into prison.
Conversion of the Philippian jailer.
Berean Bible students.
Paul at Athens, address on Mars Hill.
Paul a tent-maker at Corinth.
Persecution, a strong church formed at Corinth.

Acts 18 : 23–21 : 16.

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

nearly 3 years, A.D. 50, 51, 52.

Paul revisits the Asia Minor churches, to strengthen them.
Spends nearly 3 years at Ephesus.
Revisits Berea, Thessalonica, Philippi, Corinth, — returning via Troas, Miletus, Tyre and Cæserea to Jerusalem.

Adventures

The seven sons of Sceva, a Jew.
Burning the costly books of Magic.
Riot at Ephesus about the shrines of Diana.
Eutychus, asleep during the long services at Troas, falls from a third story window, restored by Paul.
Paul's farewell address to the Ephesian elders at Miletus.
Deacon Philip and his four daughters who prophesied, welcome Paul at Cæsarea.
Paul goes on to Jerusalem in spite of many warnings of danger.

Acts 21 : 17–28 : 31.

A Series of Wonderful Providences by which Paul was enabled to reach Rome in the Best Way.

A.D. 57–62.

Paul for a long time had desired to preach the Gospel in Rome, the capital of the world.
Every one of the trials, hindrances, oppositions, and attacks by enemies, proved to be the means by which he could best gain the desired end.

Adventures

The assault on Paul in the Temple Court.
Brought Paul under the protection of Rome as a Roman citizen.
His enemies banded together to murder Paul.
This led him to be taken to Cæsarea under a Roman guard.
He was imprisoned two years in Cæsarea.
This gave him a needed rest ; and gave him opportunity to preach the Gospel to kings, and those in authority, and to prove his innocence.
He was attacked and slandered by Jews from Jerusalem.
Hence he appealed to Cæsar ; and was sent to Rome, under perfect protection.
The shipwreck in the hurricane.
Gave him an opportunity to show what he was ; to save the ship's crew and passengers, and make the officials friendly when he reached Rome.
He was chained to a soldier in Rome.
Hence he was safe from all enemies, and always had an audience, and could reach many Roman citizens.

INDEX.

Subject.	Page.
Æneas and Dorcas	109
"Almost persuaded"	299
Ananias	107
Ananias, the false disciple	66
"And as of old, by two and two"	43
"And Dorcas in her daughters lives"	116
"And homes of purity and mills and marts"	357
"And I knew at length that if only"	41
"And this one thought of hope and trust"	358
Angel of little sacrifices, The	237
Angels in the Kitchen, The	313
"An infant crying in the night"	211
"Another of those splendors"	80
Answers to prayer unexpected	136
Antioch in Pisidia	147
Antioch in Syria	138
"A poor man saved by thee shall make thee rich"	201
Appeal to Cæsar, The	287
Areopagus, Paul's address before	208
"Arise and fly the reeling faun"	257
Arrest of Paul, The	259
Ascending Lord, The	13
"A servant with this clause"	215
Asia	169
"Ask God to give thee skill"	60
Assurance of the triumph of Christianity	357
"At first I prayed for light"	231
Athens in the time of Paul	205
Atonement	125
"Awake my soul, and for the strife"	79
Barnabas	66, 139
Barnabas and Mark	167
Basket over the wall	108
Baucis and Philemon	155
Bearing our own burdens. (Ills.)	176
Beds in Palestine	112
"Behind him lay the gray Azores"	311
Belief and salvation. (Ills.)	186
"Belshazzar, Babylonian king of old"	297
"Beneath the cross those waters rise"	360
Ben Hassan, Story of	59
Berea, Paul's experience at	196
"Best that glimmers through the worst"	31
Black Valley Country, The	69
Blindness of Saul	107
Boldness of Peter and John, The	49
Boy and the kite, The. (Ill.)	25
Boy that wanted to be a soldier	257
Brotherhood of man, The	210
Bunyan in prison; how it worked good	289
Burden-bearing. (Ills.)	175
"Burn, fire, burn, and quick destroy"	242
Burning the books of magic	241
Burying weeds at roots of flowers	203
"But God in His Heaven still ruleth"	356
Cæsarea	117, 288
Call of the West, The	166
"Can I be stem and another be wheat?"	228
Carnegie Hero Commission, Report of	90
Castle of Antonia	131
Catacombs of Rome	83
Centurions	117
Changes wrought by love. (Ill.)	121
Charges against Paul by Tertullus	282
Children and heirs of God	39
China's attitude towards opium	318
Christ crucified the power of God	223
Christ died for sinners. (Ill.)	126
Christian Brotherhood at Jerusalem, The	64
Christian Endeavor Convention at Barcelona, Spain	94
Christianity, its triumph	357
Christianity not responsible for evils around	356
Christianity proved by Saul's conversion	109
Christianity's business to cure evils around it	356
Christian love known by its qualities	227
Christians defined	141
Christians first so-called	140
Christian unity	222
"Christ is risen! henceforth never"	129
Christmas gift, The best	366
"Christmas in lands of the fir tree and pine"	368
Christmas Lesson	362
Church, Aim of a modern	315
Church as a family; school; hospital; army	37
Church of the Mustard Seed, The	221
Church of the Shining Light	200
Church, Problems of the early	316
Church, Progress of the early	65
Church unity; its conditions	59
Cilician Gates	168
City in its making	17
City of God in the making	360
City of God under the symbol of a city	359
City of God under the type of a Paradise	360
Clay that had been with the rose	55
Cole's Voyage of Life	307
Collection for the poor Christians	232
Coming of the Holy Spirit, The	22
Community of goods	65
Confessing Christ by baptism	99
Consecrated life, A	332
Contrary winds	302
Conversion	106
Conversion of Saul	102
Corinth as a mission field	213
Corinthian church, Many good things in	222
Corinthian evils in our nation	218
Corinthians, First Epistle to the	220
Council at Jerusalem, The	159
Courage of the commonplace	90
Courageous church, Story of a	56
Court scene in Herod's palace	281
Creation, The redemption of	40
Creed of the early church	124
Cripple of Lystra, The	152
Cripples and faith	155
Crystal Maze in Paris, The	236
Crystal River, The Land of the	69
"Cuthbert, let us perish, hope is o'er"	305
Cyprus	142
Damascus	104
Dante on being neutrals in religion	299
Dark Closet, The story of the	33
Deacons: first organization in the church	73
Deacons, The seven	75
"Dear Jesus, help me now I pray"	313
Death of Stephen, The	76
Deliverances wrought by Christ	135
Demetrius, a business man of Ephesus	242
Demoniac girl	181
Derbe	154
"Dig channels for the streams of love"	336
"Dipt into the future, far as human eye"	361
Disappointing the enemy	266
Disguised angel revealed. (Ill.)	25
Disputes and how to settle them	166
Divide and conquer: plan used by Paul	276
Doing the impossible	113
Dorcas	21
Down the dark future through long generations.	176
Drunkenness in Europe	263
Dust on your glasses. (Ill.)	
Earnestness in the Lord's service	336
Earthquake in Philippi	185
Earth's holocaust	366
Eleventh of Hebrews paraphrased from missionary history	89

Subject.	Page.
Elymas	143
Envy. (Ill.)	149
Ephesian church, Characteristics of the	346, 347
Ephesus, the church of waning enthusiasm	346
Ephesus, The city of	239
Erie R. R.; system of recognition	198
Evil that good may come	156
Expectation Corner; The Royal Exchange Office	40
Expressional activities, Need of	259
Fable of the looking-glass	346
Faith and its victories, Aids to	91
Faithful unto Death. (Rev. 2.)	345
Faith, Hope, and Love	231
Faith that makes heroes	86
Faith working in modern times	89
"Faster and more fast, o'er earth's brim"	20
Felix before Paul	285
Festus and the new plot to kill Paul	289
First Epistle to the Corinthians	220
First missionary meeting	159
Five ways of treating the gospel	297
Flesh and spirit, The conflict between	38
Foreign Missions, The era of	370
"For sadder sight than eye can know"	311
Forward steps in the temperance reform	179
From Melita to Rome	322
Fruits of Paul's ministry in Thessalonica	194
Fruit trees, why not rustle?	66
Gallio cared for none of these things	219
Gates to the City of God, The	358
Gentile Christians	160
Gentiles pressing into Judaism	150
Gentleman, Description of a	53
Gift of tongues, The modern	28
"Give strength, give thought, give deeds"	236
Giving away flowers brings more	235
Glory of doing without, The	42
"Glory of virtue to fight, to struggle"	352
"God gives each man one life, like a lamp"	100
"God has His best things for the few"	79
"God moves in a mysterious way"	279
God's stamp of approval. (Ill.)	162
God's vision of character	122
God the giver of food	157
Golden Pen, The League of the	200
Goodness and greatness	140
Gordon, Gen. Charles, Epitaph of in St. Paul's Cathedral	331
Gospel for the Gentiles in Rome	329
Gospels, Making the most beautiful copy of the (Ill.)	353
Grace in the heart. (Ill.)	140
Grace of Giving, The	231
Greatest Thing in the World, The	225
Greek legend of Cadmus	277
Green roses. (Ill.)	179
"Hands Off," a story of Providence	208
Happiness, The magician's recipe for	312
Harvard University; sermon by Pres. Walker	69
"Have we seen her, the new city?"	361
"He climbed Love's ladder so high"	19
Helen Keller gives the keynote to her life	286
"He liveth long who liveth well"	87
Herod Agrippa I	131
Heroes and Martyrs of the Faith	84
Heroes in daily life	86
Heroism of war and the heroism of peace	256
Hero medals	85
"He saw a hand they could not see"	261
Hilarious giving	235
Holy City, The	354
Holy Spirit guiding	169
Holy Spirit, Symbols of the	26
Hospitality, Given to	336
Hour of prayer	118
House of Fulfilment, The	71
How Paul became converted	269
Humbled and Exalted	57
Hurricane on the Mediterranean, The	303
"I aim her, and this my kingdom"	257
"I asked the roses as they grew"	28
"I cannot hide that some have striven"	39
Iconium	153
Ideal and goal of the material world	356
"I falter where I firmly trod"	211
"If I might guess, then guess I would"	114
"If thou wilt be a hero and wilt strive"	63
"If you are tempted to reveal"	263
"I know a land where the streets are paved"	287
Illustrating the spirit of the gospel	241
"I may not stay to see the day"	362
Immigration and intemperance	177
Immortality proved by Christ's resurrection	128
Imperfect instruments. (Ill.)	222
Infallible proofs of the presence of the Holy Spirit	25
"In guise of seraph rapt"	79
Inheritance of the saints, The	297
"In Necessarias Unitas"	60
Inner prison	184
Interpretation, The need of	98
"Into the harbor of heaven now we glide"	312
Isaiah's vision of the Redeemer	366
"I see the crowd in Pilate's hall"	33
"Is it not strange the darkest hour"	224
Italian band	117
"It is not the deed we do"	236
James the first martyr	131
James the Just	163
Japanese prisoner's work for Christ	330
Jesus Christ, the First and the Last	338
Jesus' last words to his disciples	17
Jesus rose from the dead, Proof that	14
Jesus, Vision of the glorified	342
Jewish nation in the Valley of the Shadow of Death	363
Jews' intercourse with Gentiles	122
Joaquin Miller's poem of Columbus	311
John Mark returns to Jerusalem	146
John's commission to write to the churches	341
Joppa	112
Josephine's funeral. (Ill.)	115
Journeying Towards Jerusalem	245
Joy of deliverance, The	364
Judas Barsabas	164
Jupiter and Mercury in Lycaonia	155
Kicking against the pricks	106
Kingdom of heaven on earth	356
Kingdom over which Christ is King	367
Lame Man Leaping, The	42
"Land of Pretty Soon, The"	321
Laodicea, the lukewarm church	353
Large gifts	237
"Large is the life that flows for others' sakes"	63
Latimer and Henry VIII. (Ill.)	56
Laying up treasures in heaven	234
"League of the Golden Pen, The"	200
"Learn from yon orient shell to love thy foe"	337
Learning the Scriptures by heart	197
"Learn to ride the horse that threw you"	37
"Let me live in a house by the side of the road"	56
Lictors	183
Life, The Sea of	307
Lime for Christians. (Ill.)	125
Living Sacrifice, A	331
Loch Katrine, the source of Glasgow's water supply	360
Looking-glass, Fable of the	346
"Look up and not down"	201
Love and personality. (Ill.)	129
Love and the Temperance reformation	227, 229, 231
"Love divine will fill thy storehouse"	237
Love is a growth	230
Love is the greatest thing in the world	231
Love never faileth	229
Lo, We Turn to the Gentiles	144
Luke, the beloved physician	170
Lycaonia	154
Lydda	111

Subject.	Page.
Lydia	172
Lystra	154
Macedonian call	170
Magician's recipe for happiness	312
Malaria in Perga	146
Malta, Reception by inhabitants of	312
Malta, on which Paul was wrecked	309
Man's life a plan of God	42
Maxims for guiding the Christian Life	335
Measure of the gift, The	237
"Meine Trübsal war mein Glück"	280
Memorials	118
Men-pleasers	131
Methods of teaching the Bible, Paul's	192
"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth"	71
Miracle, A modern	47
Miracle of San Diego	313
Missionaries dedicated	142
Missionaries expelled. (Ills.)	151
Missionaries guided. (Ills.)	169
Missionaries of Antioch, The	137
Missionary heroes	89
Modern ways of searching the Scriptures	197
Moody's experience in a wreck	306
Moody's story of two Christians in heaven	258
Moral equivalent of war, The	256
More blessed to give than to receive	236
"More things are wrought by prayer"	23
Mothers and their great work. (Ill.)	168
Multiplied Church, The	75
Multiplied Man, The	76
Near-sighted spectacles, Vision through	354
New applications of Christ's teachings	204
New earth the ideal and goal of the material world	356
New heaven, The	356
New saying of Christ, A	251
Niagara for a grist-mill. (Ill.)	128
"Not what we give but what we share"	66
Oberlin, A story of	75
"O golden day, so long desired"	210
"O Golden Day, the ages crown"	356
"Oh blindness to the future, kindly given"	18
"Oh love, they die on yon rich sky"	291
"O lead me, Lord, that I may lead"	46
"O Lord, I pray that for this day"	313
"O Master, it is good to be"	258
"O Master, let me walk with thee"	74
"O may I join the Choir Invisible"	92
"Once in my dreams I heard a voice"	71
"Once to every man and nation"	292
"One cry of 'Courage' amidst the strife"	326
"One ship drives East, another drives West"	311
"One who never turned his back, but"	94
Opening the Scriptures	193
Opposition does good	152
Oriental legend of a fountain	360
Oriental Rugs; illustration from	61
Our Bithynias	169
Overcoming evil with good	337
"'O where is the sea,' the fishes said"	211
"O young mariner, down to the haven"	307
Palsy	112
Pamphylia	145
Paphos	143
Party spirit at Corinth	222
Paul and his friends on the ship	301
Paul and Thekla	153
Paul and the viper	313
Paul a Prisoner in the Castle	266
Paul as a Bible student	328
Paul at Athens	204
Paul at Corinth	212
Paul at Thessalonica and Berea	190
Paul before Felix	280
Paul before King Agrippa	292
Paul before the Jewish Sanhedrin	275
Paul bringing cheer in danger	305
Paul exorcises a demon	182
Paul in Rome	326
Paul meets the Athenian philosophers	207
Paul mobbed in the Temple court	264
Paul refutes the charges of Tertullus	283
Paul's address before the Areopagus	208
Paul's appeal to Felix	286
Paul's collection for the poor Christians	232
Paul's conversion: changes it made in him	270
Paul's Defence before Agrippa	293
Paul's early life and training	268
Paul sees a rainbow of promise	277
Paul's experience at Berea	196
Paul's experience at Cæsarea	261
Paul's experience at Tyre	260
Paul's experiences at Thessalonica	191
Paul's experiences going to Jerusalem	260
Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders	248
Paul's journey from Naples to Rome	325
Paul's manner of life at Thessalonica	194
Paul's methods of teaching the Bible	192
Paul's nephew saves his uncle's life	278
Paul's opportunities to preach the gospel to the Roman leaders	292
Paul's solution of the problems of the early church	316
Paul's Sorrows and Comforts	252
Paul's statesmanship	246
Paul's sufferings, Story of	253
Paul's Third Missionary Journey	239
Paul's thorn in the flesh	258
Paul's three months in Malta	314
Paul's two years in prison at Cæsarea	288
Paul's voyage to Italy	323
Paul's welcome by the Jerusalem church	262
Paul the hero	253
Paul the leader in danger	306
Paul the orator before Agrippa	294
Paul working at his trade of tentmaking	215
Pentecost, The scene on	23
Perga	145
Pergamum: the church in a stronghold of Satan	350
Persecution inspired by money losses	182
Persecution spreading the gospel	93
Persecutors	104
Persian fable of rose and clay	55
Persian story of creation, A	274
Peter and John arrested	50
Peter and Cornelius	116
Peter as a missionary	111
Peter Delivered from Prison	130
Peter's Sermon at Pentecost	29
Peter's testimony	162
Pharisaic Christians	160
Philadelphia: its rewards for overcoming	352
Philip and the Ethiopian	92
Philippi	171
Philippian Jailer, The	180
Philippians, Paul's Epistle to the	58
Phœnicia	138
Pictures of the first Christian church	34
Pilgrim's Progress: the unquenched fire	51
Plain of Sharon	112
"Plant blessings and blessings will bloom"	178
Plato on Socrates' thorn in the flesh	258
Plot that Failed, A	274
Plot to assassinate Paul	277
Port to which we should sail, The	307
Power of prayer	132
Practical duties from consecrated life	333
Prayer and its influence	135
Prayer and perils	132
Prayer as indicating character	107
Praying-places	172
Prayermeeting in Jerusalem	135
"Pray! yet I do not tell you"	259
Precautions unavailing	133
Prisoner's wonderful work, A	330
Problems which puzzled the early church	316
Proconsuls and proprætors	143
Progress of the church	71
Promise of the Father, Waiting for the	23
Prophecy	334
Prophets	141

Subject.	Page.
Punishment sure	177
Purple dyes	172
Reading the Scriptures aloud	96
Red Cloud's Question as to Jesus' return	19
Reformers called trouble-makers	183
Religion of Athens	206
Resurrection of Jesus: proof that he lives	15
Resurrection proofs	126
Revelation, A chart of the Book of	340
Revelation, The Book of the	339
Reviews	100, 187, 272, 369
"Revile him not, the tempter hath"	69
Rhoda	136
Righteousness and love	361
Righteousness the hope of the church and the country	203
Riot at Ephesus, The	238
Risen Christ, The; Easter Lesson	123
Roman charter of religious freedom	219
Roman citizenship; how it helped Paul	271
Romans not to be beaten	187
Romans, Paul's Epistle to the	332
Rose and the clay, The	55
Rulers of the synagogue	148
Ruskin on "Blind Mouths"	250
Ruskin's appeal	60
Russia's prohibition of vodka	318
Sabbath problems of the early church	316
Sacrifices to idols	164
"Sail on, Sail on!"	311
Saints	111
Salamis	142
Salvation defined	186
Samothrace	171
Sardis, the church that received little praise	352
Saul's retirement	108
Saviour we need, The	19
Scylla and Charybdis	323
Searching the Scriptures	197
Second coming of Christ, The	20
Seed-sowing in the saloon	178
Seleucia	142
Self-conceit, Avoiding	333
"Self is the only prison that can bind the soul"	229
Sermons in candles	72
Sermon to Children: The Dark Closet	33
Serpent knawing at a file	56
Seven Churches of Asia, Present state	353
Seven Helpers, The	70
Ships, Ancient Roman	301
Shipwrecked on Melita	308
Shrines of Diana	242
Sickness and its compensations	112
Silas	164
Simon Magus	96
Slanders against Paul	202, 262
Sleeping in danger	133
Smyrna: the church with the crown of life	349
Social relations at Corinth	316
Solon the glory of Greece. (Ill.)	128
Songs in prison	184
Songs in the night	59
Sorcerers among the Romans	143
"Sordid the world were vision not"	121
"Sow a thought and reap an act"	235
"Sower divine! sow the good seed in me"	178
"So when the Christian's eyelid droops"	134
"So when two work together, each for each"	140
Sowing and Reaping, Temperance Lesson	174
Sowing and reaping	234
Speaking evil of rulers	275
"Speak to Him then, for He heareth"	39
Spirit of Life, The	37
Stephen	77
Stocks	184
Stoning of Paul	158
Stop! Look! Listen!	291
Storms on the voyage of life	311
Stormy scene in the Council Hall	275
Story by U. S. Secretary of the Navy	290
Story of a Short Life, by Mrs. Ewing	257
Street called Straight (allegorical)	316
St. Zita. (Ill.)	114
"Such as I have give I thee"	46
Suicide among the ancients	185
Sweeping out the Atlantic ocean	52
"Swiftly and straight each tongue of flame"	25
Synagogue worship	147
Systematic giving	236
Tarsus	103
Tanners in Palestine	119
Telling only a part of the truth is falsehood	283
Temperance: a little dialogue	321
Temperance Lessons	64, 174, 225, 315
Temperance: a young man's courage	320
Tertullus accuses Paul	282
"That night when in the Egyptian skies"	365
"The Avon to the Severn runs"	84
"The House of Never is built, they say"	287
"The light that lifted and transfigured him"	80
"There is no soul too wrecked to bless"	123
"These, tho' their names appear not"	256
Thessalonian Christians, The	198
Thessalonian disciples comforted by Paul	203
Thessalonians, First Epistle to	199
Thessalonica	191
"The thing we long for that we are"	358
"The wise and true crave not for lofty tasks"	201
"The world sits at the feet of Christ"	63
"Thine early dreams which came in shapes"	358
"This fellow pecks up wit as pigeons pease"	208
"Tho' the cause of evil prosper"	51
"Thou too sail on, O ship of State"	311
"Thus the Lord can make a way"	135
Thyatira: church which received Morning Star	351
Timothy	168
"'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant"	240
"'Tis not in man to look unmoved"	307
"To blind old Milton's rayless orbs"	31
"To thine own self be true"	69
Training S. S. children to give	237
Trances	120
Transformed man, The	333
Troas	170
Trouble changed into a blessing	280
Truthfulness the foundation of character	69
Turning the world upside down	191, 195
Two words that got married	291
Tyrannus and his lecture hall at Ephesus	240
"Ubi plura nitent non ego possis"	275
Unity, Christian	60
Unto us a Son is Given	362
"Upward we press, the air is clear"	93
Vision of the glorified Jesus	342
Vision of the new heaven and earth	355
Visions and tasks	121
Voyage of Life	307, 310
Voyage Toward Rome, The	300
"Was the trial sore?"	257
"We all might do good where we"	66
"We are but organs mute till a Master"	26
"We cannot kindle when we will"	258
"We, ignorant of ourselves"	40
"We lay in dust life's glory, dead	333
"When one holds communion with the skies"	80
"When the fight begins within himself"	257
"When these earthly years are past and gone"	84
"Who shall preserve thee, beautiful child"	307
Wickliffe and his doctrine	84
Wickliffe's Bible, Picture in	72
Witnesses to the resurrection	127
Women influential in Asia Minor	151
Word of the Cross, The	220
Workshop locked. (Ill.)	175
World's S. S. Convention at Jerusalem	35
World's Temperance Lesson	315
Wreck, A modern experience	306
"Yet sometimes glimpses on my sight"	357
Yorick the jester and the king	298
"You may break, you may shatter the vase"	55

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